

## **Do Asbestos Awareness Regulations Affect Me?**

Asbestos awareness is vital. According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), asbestos kills around 5000 workers each year - more than the number of people killed on roads. When employers fail to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 it can be life-threatening, resulting in prosecution and potentially catastrophic fines.

*Why is asbestos dangerous?*

If materials containing asbestos are disturbed then toxic fibers are released into the air. These fibers don't have an immediate affect but can cause fatal conditions like asbestosis, which is a lung disease, and asbestos-related lung cancers. These diseases are not often diagnosed until it's too late. Protect yourself and your workers by building asbestos awareness. You don't necessarily need to remove asbestos. You do, however, need to identify and manage asbestos so that it never presents a health hazard.

*Under the regulations, am I responsible for the asbestos in my building?*

If you own your premises then you are responsible. If you are a tenant, then you might still be accountable. Under your tenancy agreement, if you are responsible for alterations, repairs and maintenance then you are also responsible for asbestos control. If you share maintenance duties with the owner or other occupiers of the building then you are jointly accountable.

*What happens if my employees encounter asbestos during the course of their work on or off site?*

Employees need to be made aware that they should stop work immediately if they suspect asbestos is present. Asbestos work can only be carried out by a non-licensed contractor where appropriate information, instruction and training have been given. Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 the vast majority of employers working with asbestos need a license. Employers have a legal duty to provide instruction and training to employees who are likely to come across asbestos.

*What happens when the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 are breached?*

In August this year a Wigan building contractor was fined nearly £8,000 for breaching regulations. His work resulted in asbestos contamination of somebody's home. The owners couldn't enter their house for a week while a £12,000 clean-up operation was carried out. HSE Inspector David Norton said: 'This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices. Companies and individuals should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards'.

Understand your legal duties by reading the regulations on the HSE website:  
<http://ow.ly/702R30gaD4y>.

### *How do I detect asbestos?*

Asbestos can be found in any building built before 2000. If in doubt, always assume the building contains asbestos. The HSE website contains a number of images to help you to detect asbestos. However, it's difficult to identify because it's often mixed in with other materials. You can pay an external asbestos licensed contractor to carry out a search.

NDC Management offer an Asbestos Awareness course which will help you and your employees to detect asbestos, stay safe and stay legal.

### *What are the benefits of NDC Management's Asbestos Awareness course?*

NDC Management run half-day Asbestos Awareness courses throughout the country so there will be a convenient location for you. As well as learning the dangers of asbestos, you will discover how to identify the different types and locations of asbestos in the workplace and on customers' sites. The course thoroughly covers:

- the types of materials that can contain asbestos
- the legal duty to manage asbestos
- safe work practices
- control limits
- accidental release and decontamination procedures
- the uses and limitations of respiratory protective equipment and personal protection equipment.

### *Why is asbestos awareness training essential?*

To avoid disturbing asbestos you have to be able to spot it. Well-informed employers understand how to reduce or eliminate the risks to their employees' health and to stay inside the law. Employees who are asbestos aware will be able to assess the risks on an ongoing basis, knowing when to protect themselves and how they would deal with contamination.