



Recovering from winter flooding – dealing with asbestos?

The Health and Safety Executive want to help business and communities affected by the recent floods get up and running again quickly and safely.

The clean-up may involve hazards from asbestos in flooded buildings, and while the risk will be low you should nevertheless think about this and take the appropriate precautions to protect your and others' health.

To help we have made it easier for licenced asbestos contractors to start work on flood remediation as soon as possible by temporarily relaxing the usual timescales for planning work.

What you need to do:

It is really important that you take precautions to protect yourself, your employees and anyone carrying out work for you, as asbestos can be in places you might not expect. You could come into contact with it without knowing. We just want you to be safe and not risk your health.

So, here's some advice from the Health and Safety Executive:

Before you commission or carry out any remedial work that has the potential to disturb asbestos, you will need to find out if there are any asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in the premises or structure.

You need to know:

- [Where you can find asbestos](#) and what condition it is in.
- The amount of asbestos present.
- Whether work is likely to disturb the material.
- What type of asbestos it is as certain material will require a [licenced asbestos contractor](#) to remove it. These include bath panels, airing cupboard walls, gas and electric meter fuse boxes and pipe lagging. Often it may have been painted or protected by an outer coating but, in all its forms, it is not always visible to the naked eye.

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If asbestos is not removed correctly in the first place, you may have to arrange for additional work to be carried out at extra cost, so more reason to do it right first time.

Find further guidance on [working safely with asbestos](#) and on [recovering your business safely after flooding](#) on the HSE website.

Our thoughts and best wishes are with everyone affected by the floods and we hope your businesses are back up and running again soon.