

Removing an asbestos cement or reinforced plastic product, such as tanks, ducts or water cisterns

This information sheet sets out safe work practices for removing an asbestos cement tank or reinforced plastic product (such as a bakerlite cistern). These are commonly removed from roof cavities.



Check the product is not attached to asbestos insulating board (AIB). If it is, and the AIB needs to be removed, it must be done by a Class-A licensed removalist. See [Section 2.0 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#)

Read this information sheet alongside the [Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#). Make sure you are familiar with the general requirements for asbestos removal as explained in these guidelines before doing any asbestos removal.

Before you start

Tools and equipment you will need

You will need the following equipment:

- warning tape and notices
- heavy-duty polythene sheeting
- strong adhesive tape
- screwdriver and spanners
- hammer



- low-pressure sprayer containing water mixed with detergent (1 part detergent to 8 parts water)
- bucket of water and rags
- asbestos waste bag, or sealable skip or hazardous waste rated transportation bag large enough to hold the removed material
- clear, heavy-duty polythene bag
- PPE and RPE.

See [Section 12 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for more information about tools and equipment, including prohibited tools.

See [Section 17 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for detailed PPE and RPE requirements.

Isolate the work area

Take steps to stop unauthorised people from entering the work area while the removal is underway and until the area has been decontaminated at the end of the job:

- put barriers and signs up to keep people away from the work area
- close all access points – such as doors, windows or gates
- move items out of the way or cover and seal them with heavy-duty polythene sheeting. This will save you having to decontaminate the items later
- for roof spaces and similar areas lay boards down over the work area to stop any asbestos from contaminating ceiling insulation. Lay heavy-duty polythene sheeting over the board
- set up your decontamination area
- for removing non-friable asbestos less than 10m² an enclosure is not normally required. See [Section 9.3 of the of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#)

Put on your PPE and RPE

Make sure you are wearing the right PPE and RPE.

- For PPE and RPE requirements see [Section 17 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#)
- [Video: How to wear a disposable respirator safely](#)
- [Video: How to wear a reusable respirator safely](#)

Doing the job

Safe removal procedures

If you can remove the product without having to dismantle or break it:

Step 1

Strengthen any damaged sections with strong adhesive tape.

Step 2

Remove fittings, plumbing etc and unscrew the product from its supports.
Place the screws in the asbestos waste bag.

Step 3

Double-wrap the product in heavy-duty polythene sheeting. Attach asbestos warning stickers. Lower to the ground carefully.

Step 4

Place wrapped product in asbestos waste bag, or sealable skip or hazardous waste rated transportation bag large enough to hold the removed material.

If the only way to remove the product is to dismantle or break it:

Dismantling or breaking up the product increases the risk of asbestos exposure – it should only be done if there is no other way to remove it.

Step 1

Dampen the product and wrap it in heavy-duty polythene sheeting.

Step 2

Carefully break the wrapped product with the hammer. See figure 1.

Step 3

If pieces are small enough, place them whole in asbestos waste bags.

Step 4

Lower large pieces to the ground.
Don't drop them or use rubble chutes. Stack sheets carefully.

Step 5

Double-wrap large pieces in heavy-duty polythene sheeting. Seal with strong adhesive tape and attach asbestos warning stickers.

Step 6

Place wrapped pieces in sealable skip or hazardous waste rated transportation bag large enough to hold the removed material.



FIGURE 1: Carefully break the wrapped product with the hammer

Once you have finished

Clean up and waste disposal

Put all disposable materials used during the removal (such as polythene sheeting) in the asbestos waste bag then double bag it and tape it closed with a gooseneck tie. Clearly label it as containing asbestos.

- [Video: Disposing of asbestos waste and PPE safely](#)
- See [Section 14 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for detailed written instructions.

Thoroughly decontaminate the work area and all reusable tools and equipment used during the work.

- [Video: How to decontaminate tools safely](#)
- See [Section 16 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for detailed written instructions.

Personal decontamination

You must thoroughly decontaminate yourself.

- [Video: Taking off your respirator and PPE safely](#)
- See [Section 15 of the Asbestos removal – good practice guidelines](#) for more detailed written instructions.

Final checks

- Visually inspect the area to make sure it is clean.
- Clearance air monitoring is not normally required for this task.