



B15.1

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Case Studies

Group B
Physiological
Requirements

Hazard B15
Asbestos and
Manufactured
Mineral Fibres

Example B15.1
1920-45
Top-floor
Flat

Vulnerable Group
Persons of all ages

Multiple Locations
No

Related Hazard A4
Fire and
Explosions



Dwelling

Description

The dwelling is a top-floor, two-bedroomed flat in a four-storey block of 'mansion' flats built in the 1930s. Fire protection measures were added to the flats on the top floor of the block in the early 1960s.



1
Front exterior

Deficiencies

Description

The wooden entrance doors to each flat were lined internally with 8 mm chrysotile ('white') asbestos cement sheet. Some of this sheeting has been damaged, having broken away when new handles/locks fitted to the doors. This has resulted in asbestos fibres being exposed. Above and below this, the cover-strip designed to protect the edge of the asbestos sheet from damage is missing.

There are no Artex ceilings or other sources of asbestos in the flat. There is no asbestos register for the building and none of the asbestos present is labelled as such.



Relevant Baseline Indicators

0

Satisfactory
or N/A

1

Not
Satisfactory

2

Defective

3

Seriously
Defective

Subject		Score				BI	Baseline Indicator
1	Structural Condition	0	1	2	3	1.2	All asbestos-containing material shall be maintained non-friable and free from any defects such as holes, cracks, tears, and/or looseness that may allow the release of fibres into the environment. Any friable or damaged asbestos identified shall be removed. An asbestos register for each dwelling shall be created and kept up to date.
11	Security	0	1	2	3	11.5	All door and window frames and furniture shall operate properly and be in a good state of repair, with no open joints or compromised seals between the windows/ doors and adjacent walls.

Relevant Matters

0

Satisfactory
or N/A

1

Not
Satisfactory

2

Defective

3

Seriously
Defective

Score

Matters affecting
Likelihood of Harm

0 1 2 3

Date of construction

Asbestos

0 1 2 3

Accessibility

0 1 2 3

Sealing

0 1 2 3

Labelling

0 1 2 3

State of repair

Manufactured Mineral Fibres

0 1 2 3

Accessibility

Score

Matters affecting
Harm Outcomes

0 1 2 3

Date of construction

Asbestos

0 1 2 3

Accessibility

0 1 2 3

Sealing

0 1 2 3

Labelling

0 1 2 3

State of repair

Manufactured Mineral Fibres

0 1 2 3

Accessibility

Likelihood of Harm

Scale Points	
Likelihood of harm from this hazard over the next twelve months	
Very Likely	1 in 1
	1 in 2
	1 in 3
	1 in 5
Likely	1 in 10
	1 in 20
	1 in 30
	Example Dwelling1 in 50
Unlikely	1 in 100
	1 in 200
	1 in 300
	1 in 500
Very Unlikely	1 in 1,000
	1 in 2,000
	1 in 3,000
	National Average1 in 5,000
Score	
1 in 50	

Justification of Scoring

The unsealed asbestos cement sheet is in such condition that it is currently likely to, and almost certain will over the coming 12 months, release fibres to the internal atmosphere. This release is likely to be during use, when the resident opens or closes the door, resulting in exposure multiple times a day. This motion may well cause the release of fibres over a wide area.

The condition is likely to deteriorate further due to the lack of protection to the sheet and the continual use of the door for access and egress. The damaged area will probably worsen over time as it is close to the interior of the door lock. Any inadvertent knocks will release more asbestos fibres. As the asbestos sheeting lacks any form of warning and there is no asbestos assessment or control for the building, there is a greater potential that a resident may look to make adjustments to the door, such as attempted repair or adding accessories such as coat hooks, and in doing so will create further fibre release.

The probability of asbestos fibres being released and inhaled is very high and the likelihood has therefore been increased significantly.

Harm Outcomes

Extreme		Severe		Serious		Moderate	
Death, permanent paralysis, etc.		Heart attack, serious fractures, etc.		Chronic stress, severe concussion, etc.		Broken fingers, moderate cuts, etc.	
Very Likely	50.0	Very Likely	50.0	Very Likely	50.0	Example Dwelling	79.0
	30.0		30.0		30.0		National Average
	20.0		20.0		20.0		
Example Dwelling + National Average	10.0	Likely	10.0	Likely	10.0	These scores are simply calculated as the sum of the other three harm outcomes subtracted from 100%	
	5.0		5.0		5.0		
	2.0		2.0		2.0		
Unlikely	1.0	Example Dwelling + National Average	1.0	Unlikely	1.0		
	0.5		0.5		0.5		
	0.2		0.2		0.2		
Very Unlikely	0.1	Very Unlikely	0.1	Very Unlikely	0.1		
	0.0		0.0		0.0		
Score		Score		Score		Score	
20.0%		1.0%		0.0%		79.0%	

Justification of Scoring

There is nothing to suggest that the harm outcomes from exposure to the asbestos would differ to those reflected in the national averages.

Safety Ratings

Scenario 1
As described in this document

Key

Category	Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000
	Low	100

Likelihood of Harm
1 in 50

Extreme 20.0%	Severe 1.0%	Serious 0.0%	Moderate 79.0%
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Category	Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000
Example Dwelling		4,036
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000
	Low	100
National Average		40

Score
4,036

Scenario 2

After works meeting baseline indicators

Likelihood of Harm 1 in 5,000			
Extreme 20.0%	Severe 1.0%	Serious 0.0%	Moderate 79.0%
Category		Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action		High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action		Medium	1,000
		Low	100
Score 40		Example Dwelling + National Average	40

Justification of Scoring

After works meeting baseline indicators

Complying with the baseline indicator would require the removal of the defective asbestos so fibres would no longer be released, eliminating the hazard.

Whilst the obvious solution is to safely remove and dispose of the asbestos, in doing so, the level of fire resistance provided by the entrance door would be reduced. In light of this, consideration should also be given to fire and explosions so that mitigation of this hazard does not have the unintentional consequence of increasing the likelihood and harm outcomes in relation to fire.

Scenario 3

After further
improvements

Likelihood of Harm			
Extreme	Severe	Serious	Moderate
Category		Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action		High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action		Medium	1,000
		Low	100

Justification of Scoring

N/A

Other Relevant Legislation and Guidance

Asbestos legislation

There are no specific laws covering asbestos and domestic property. The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 place a duty on landlords to manage the risks of asbestos of generally non-domestic property but does apply to the common areas of residential property such as stairwells in blocks of flats or houses in multiple occupation. Other legislation that may cover asbestos in domestic property includes the implied contractual rights under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (keeping in repair the structure and exterior of the property applicable if asbestos is present in the roof or some other part of the building structure and is not maintained), and the obligation on landlords to keep tenants and visitors safe from personal injury or disease that might reasonably be caused by a breach of the landlord's repairing obligations under the Defective Premises Act 1972. Whilst these provisions exist, for domestic property, enforcement action would usually be taken under the Housing Act 2004 or Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Asbestos nuisance

Asbestos at a private residential property may also be considered a statutory nuisance under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 if deemed prejudicial to health. In such cases, the local authority shall serve an abatement notice on the person responsible for the premises (e.g. the landlord) which orders that person to abate the nuisance. Asbestos that is in good condition and has not been disturbed is unlikely to constitute a nuisance.

Asbestos safe practice

Safe practice for removal: In a notice schedule it is appropriate to draw attention to the need for landlords to carry out a risk assessment due to the health risks associated with asbestos. Contractors undertaking works have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to provide a safe system of work. They should be advised that all possible care must be taken to minimise dust when cutting or drilling asbestos insulating board; this work must be carried out in the open air using hand tools with the product dampened. The operator should wear suitable respiratory protection. All waste should be sealed in labelled, dust-proof bags and must be disposed of at an authorised disposal site. Landlords should also be advised that there may be a requirement for such work to be carried out by licensed contractors only.

Updates

Matters for consideration listed in this section were correct at the time of publication. For the most up-to-date legislation and guidance in these areas, please visit the gov.uk website