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ASBESTOS POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the Company's management arrangements to ensure that all procedural arrangements comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012).

Commercial, industrial, residential, school and public buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. As long as asbestos containing material (ACM) is in good condition and is not disturbed, there is negligible risk. If it is damaged or disturbed, however, it can become a danger to health because people may breathe in asbestos fibres released into the air. Past exposure to asbestos currently kills around 4,500 people a year in Great Britain. Workers carrying out building maintenance and repair are particularly at risk, and there can be a delay of 15 to 60 years between first exposure and the onset of disease.

There are three main types of asbestos found in premises, commonly called blue asbestos (crocidolite), brown asbestos (amosite) and white asbestos (chrysotile). All three are dangerous carcinogens, but blue and brown asbestos are more hazardous than white. Despite their names, you cannot identify them by colour alone. The training covers this aspect in detail and prepares operatives to be vigilant in the workplace.

MW Fire Ltd is a non-licensed asbestos contractor. This means the Company does not carry out any work on or removal of ACMs. Operatives are trained to recognise, avoid, and report ACMs rather than to work on them.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- HSE Guidance HSG264: Asbestos — The Survey Guide
- HSE Approved Code of Practice L143: Managing and Working with Asbestos

3. Objectives

The primary objective of the MW Fire asbestos training and policy is to prepare operatives in the event that they come across ACMs or presumed ACMs, so that they understand the



dangers and take reasonable steps to secure the area and notify their supervisory staff without delay. In this way, steps are taken to prevent exposure wherever possible. This is supplementary to any external certificated asbestos awareness scheme operatives may have undertaken previously.

This policy sets out a series of practical measures that will minimise or eliminate exposure to ACMs and acknowledges the employer's responsibilities to ensure the safety of operatives working for or on behalf of the Company.

4. Presume Asbestos is Present

Under Regulation 4 of CAR 2012, where materials cannot be confirmed as asbestos-free, they must be presumed to contain asbestos and treated accordingly. Operatives do not need proof that asbestos is present before acting with caution. The default position is to presume it is there unless there is clear and documented evidence to the contrary. If in doubt, stop, step back, and report.

5. Company Responsibilities

Before commencing any works, the Company will:

- Establish from the building owner, client, or Principal Contractor the location or likely location of ACMs on the premises.
- Obtain a copy of the relevant parts of the site's asbestos register, where one exists, covering any known or suspected ACMs in the areas where work is to be carried out.
- Where no asbestos register or survey exists, request that the responsible person arrange one before work begins, including sample analysis where required.
- Carry out a risk assessment of the whole task, record the findings, and implement suitable control measures.
- Document the risk from ACMs and the method for managing them in the site RAMS, including a plan for what to do in the event that ACMs are uncovered or fibres are accidentally released during works.
- Ensure all operatives are trained in asbestos awareness before attending any construction or maintenance site.
- Record any potential exposure to asbestos in the affected individual's personal file and retain that record indefinitely, as it may be of long-term relevance to the individual's health.
- Report incidents involving asbestos exposure to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013 where required.

6. Operative Responsibilities

All operatives working for or on behalf of the Company will:

- Complete Cat A Asbestos Awareness training as defined under HSE Guidance HSG264 before attending site, and refresher training annually.
- Before starting work, check with the site representative whether an asbestos register exists and whether ACMs are known to be present in the work area.
- Presume any unidentified or suspect material may contain asbestos.
- Stop work immediately if ACMs or suspected ACMs are identified during works.

- Not work on, drill into, cut, sand, scrape, or otherwise disturb any material suspected of containing asbestos.
- Secure and cordon off the area where possible and notify their supervisor without delay.
- Report any suspected ACM encounter to the Company office.
- Follow all instructions given in training and by supervisory staff to prevent injury or ill health to themselves and others.

7. Training

Our primary approach is to train operatives to understand what asbestos is and how to recognise it in the workplace. As a prerequisite for working on a construction or maintenance site, all operatives are required to complete asbestos awareness training to the Cat A standard defined in HSE Guidance HSG264.

Refresher training is required annually. The Company's refresher training programme consists of a toolbox talk, slideshow presentation, and reading matter that includes this policy document.

The Company will make every effort to ensure all operational staff receive this training. Subcontractor asbestos awareness is reviewed as part of the Company's approved subcontractor assessments, undertaken annually.

8. Emergency Procedure — Accidental Disturbance of ACMs

If an operative suspects that an ACM has been disturbed or that asbestos fibres may have been accidentally released, the following steps must be taken immediately:

1. Stop work immediately. Do not attempt to clean up or disturb the material further.
2. Leave the area. All personnel must vacate without causing unnecessary spread of fibres. Do not sweep, vacuum, or attempt to contain the material yourself.
3. Close windows and doors to the affected area where possible.
4. Prevent access. Cordon off the area and post warning notices.
5. Remove and bag any potentially contaminated clothing before leaving the immediate area. Wash hands and face thoroughly.
6. Record the names of all persons who may have been in the area at the time.
7. Report immediately to your supervisor and to the site's Principal Contractor or building manager. State clearly that it is a suspected asbestos incident.
8. Do not re-enter the area under any circumstances until a competent person has assessed and cleared it.

The Company will be notified of any such incident without delay. Where the level of exposure is believed to have been significant, the incident will be reported under RIDDOR 2013 and recorded permanently in the affected individual's personal file.

Access to a previously contaminated area is not permitted until a new risk assessment has been carried out by the Principal Contractor and a report confirms that all surfaces and airborne contamination have been dealt with.

9. Common Locations of ACMs

The following is a practical guide to common locations where ACMs may be found in buildings constructed or refurbished before 2000. Operatives should remain alert to these materials during any site visit. This list is not exhaustive. If a material cannot be identified and the building predates 2000, presume it may contain asbestos.

Location	Typical ACM
Ceiling tiles and soffits	Asbestos insulating board (AIB)
Pipe lagging and boiler insulation	Amosite or crocidolite insulation, highly dangerous
Textured wall and ceiling coatings	Artex or similar decorative coatings, pre-1985
Floor tiles and adhesives	Vinyl floor tiles, black bitumen adhesive
Fire doors	Fireproofing panels within door construction
Electrical fuseboard (old)	Asbestos textile behind fuses
Corrugated roofing and guttering	Asbestos cement sheeting
Partition walls and ceiling boards	Asbestos insulating board or cement panels
Pipe ducts and service risers	Lagging and board linings

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any incident involving suspected or confirmed ACM exposure, to ensure it remains current and effective.

This policy should be read alongside the Company's Health and Safety Policy and RAMS documentation.