

## REMOVING CERAMIC TILES FROM ASBESTOS SHEETING

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Asbestos is a hazardous substance.

It is a risk to your health and the health of those around you if asbestos fibres become airborne.

Plan ahead to avoid disturbing materials containing asbestos.

Always prevent creating any dust.

Follow the correct safety procedures.

### STEP 1. Get your equipment together

- 0.2mm thick plastic bags no more than 1200mm long and 900mm wide for collection of asbestos waste
- 0.2mm thick plastic sheeting as a drop sheet
- Duct tape
- Bucket of water and spray bottle filled with detergent and water
- Wide scraper, hammer and chisel
- Disposable cleaning rags (eg. paper, cloth)
- Personal protective equipment – P1 or P2 respirator, disposable coveralls, safety goggles and disposal gloves

### STEP 2. Prepare the work area

- Remove all loose and unnecessary items from the work area
- Close doors and restrict entry
- Cover the floor with plastic sheeting and secure with duct tape
- Keep asbestos waste separate to all other waste
- Put on your personal protective equipment
- Check the fit of your respirator as per manufacturer's instructions

### Warning!

Check for electrical hazards. As you will be using water in this task, it is safest to turn off all electricity where you are working to prevent electrocution.

### STEP 3. Remove wall tiles

- Use the chisel to gently tap between the top of the tile and the backing sheet to release the tile (**do not** dig the chisel into the backing sheet)
- As the tile is released, spray detergent water lightly behind the tile to prevent release of fibres
- Try to prevent the tile from falling onto the plastic
- Place tiles in disposal bags (only fill the bag half full)
- Remove tile adhesive and grout residue from backing sheet to achieve a relatively flat and clean surface before laying new tiles. **Treat all waste as asbestos waste.**

If the backing sheet is damaged or broken before or during the removal of the tiles, you'll need to remove the entire sheet. You'll also need to remove the entire sheet if you can't remove the tiles without damaging the backing sheet. Arrange for the sheet to be removed by a professional or remove it yourself using the "Removing Bonded Materials Containing Asbestos"

procedure. Replace the asbestos sheeting with an alternative wall lining (eg. plywood, plasterboard, fibre cement sheeting).

#### **STEP 4. Clean up**

- Use a cloth and detergent water to gently wipe down the wall. Keep the surface damp with the detergent spray. Use a scraper to gently remove all residues and do not dig into the surface of the sheet
- With the wall sheeting now clean and level, wipe down again with a damp detergent-water cloth
- Remove larger scraps from ground plastic sheet and place in a disposal bag
- Carefully roll or fold plastic sheeting from the floor, so any collected dust or debris does not spill

#### ***Warning!***

Domestic vacuum cleaners are unsuitable and should never be used, even if they have a HEPA filter.

- If necessary, use damp rags and/or an approved asbestos vacuum cleaner to clean any remaining visibly contaminated sections of the work area
- Do not re-soak used rags in the bucket, as this will contaminate the water. Either fold the rag and use the clean surface or use a new rag.
- Place asbestos debris, used rags, plastic sheeting and other asbestos waste in disposal bags (only half fill the bag – this is to reduce the chance of the bag splitting)
- After the work area is clean, wet down your personal protective equipment and clothing with a light spray of water and place them and all used damp cloths into a disposable bag
- Before removing the bags from the work area, wipe external surfaces with damp rags to remove any dust and put the used rags in one of the bags
- Seal all disposal bags with duct tape, place into a second disposal bag and seal again
- Label all bags with an appropriate warning such as:

CAUTION – ASBESTOS  
DO NOT DAMAGE OR OPEN BAG  
DO NOT INHALE DUST  
CANCER AND LUNG DISEASE HAZARD

- Dispose of asbestos waste at the appropriate waste facility (contact your local Council for more information).