

Safe System of Working (SSOW)

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		Folio	
		Ref:	
Subject	Accidental Asbestos Exposure and Decontamination		
Materials & Equipment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spare FFP3 mask. 2. Spare disposable overalls with hood. 3. Rags and water to clean exposed skin areas. 4. Appropriate asbestos red and clear bag to receive contaminated waste. 		
Protocol for dealing with casualty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This decontamination procedure must be followed when a person (the casualty) is exposed to possible asbestos contamination when they are not wearing the required PPE and RPE. This could happen if they: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i). Accidentally enter a room where asbestos is being removed. ii). They come into contact with an area contaminated with asbestos containing material (ACM) that has spilled out from a punctured asbestos waste bag. iii). An unprotected operative accidentally disturbs known or suspected ACM during their work (e.g. while cutting, routing, or drilling in the workplace). 2. The first step is to control the immediate movement of the casualty. They must obviously remove themselves from the immediate source of asbestos contamination, but it is essential they only move to a close-by safe area to reduce the risk of spreading the problem further afield. The casualty should be encouraged to remain calm and reduce movements until this decontamination protocol can be safely started for all concerned. <p>The most common error made in this situation is the casualty leaves the property without taking any precautions to stop spreading asbestos particles that may be on their person. They might jump into a vehicle and head for home or the office to take a shower. All that achieves is exposing more people to the risk of asbestos and creates a list of areas and a vehicle that will require a deep clean before they are safe to use again.</p> 3. The second important step is to stop the casualty from breathing in asbestos fibres that may be released from their hair and clothing. <p>If they cannot be provided with a FFP3 face mask immediately, give them a Covid face mask or even a handkerchief to hold over their mouth until a FFP3 mask is made available. Anything is better than nothing.</p> 		

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Ideally, the casualty should stay still and wait until a FFP3 mask is available for them to wear. If the provision of a FFP3 is delayed, a risk-based decision will have to be made on whether to wait or proceed with this procedure.5. Once the FFP3 mask is available, the casualty should pat their face with a damp cloth, especially around the mouth and nose areas, to remove any dust and possible asbestos fibres that might be present on the skin before putting on the mask. The mask should now be the last item to be removed as the casualty carries out the last step of taking a shower.6. It should be assumed that all the exposed skin, hair, external clothing and shoes are all potentially contaminated with asbestos fibres. The next step is to gently remove the shoes and outer clothing, down to the closest layer next to the skin that protects the modesty of the casualty. Although the overriding priority is to protect the casualty from harm by removing contaminated clothing, there remains a need to respect appropriate gender behaviour, and not overstep accepted boundaries of common decency.7. The casualty must then put on the disposable overalls and make sure the hood is used to cover their hair.8. The casualty is now ready to be safely taken home or to our office, so they can take a shower and be given a fresh set of overalls.9. Any of the casualty's clothes and shoes that cannot be thoroughly cleaned, must be treated as asbestos-contaminated waste, bagged-up and disposed of as contaminated waste in the normal way.10. As soon as possible, the directors should be notified that a possible contamination of an unprotected individual has occurred. They will launch an immediate investigation to identify what actions are needed to be taken and what lessons can be learned to avoid a reoccurrence arising again.
Protocol for contaminated rooms	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is essential that any rooms that have been potentially contaminated by asbestos are sealed off and people prevented from entering them until they have undergone a deep clean by asbestos trained operatives.