

# USING PPE & RPE

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT & RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The purpose of wearing PPE when working with asbestos is to create a barrier between you and the fibres. There should be no tears or breaks in any PPE products. Remember, if products (such as coveralls) are damaged or torn, fibres can get in so any damaged or perished PPE must NOT be used and must be disposed of.



1. **IF YOU'RE NOT SURE IF A PRODUCT CONTAINS ASBESTOS, TREAT IT AS IF IT IS ASBESTOS AND TAKE ALL THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS!**
2. **SUITABLE PPE** is made from materials that protect you and your clothes from fibres including coveralls, gloves, safety footwear, shoe covers, gloves and protective eyewear.
3. **DISPOSABLE PPE** can be used **ONLY ONCE** then must be disposed of safely just like any asbestos waste (see page 3).
4. **PPE and RPE** should be kept on a worksite where asbestos is suspected in case of unexpected finds or exposure to asbestos.



### DON'TS

- ✗ **NEVER CREATE** dust.
- ✗ **NEVER BREAK** asbestos sheeting.
- ✗ **NEVER WORK** in windy conditions.
- ✗ **NEVER USE POWER TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT** that can produce dust unless you follow the recommended best practice industry guidelines.
- ✗ **NEVER USE BROOMS OR BRUSHES** except for sealing if using paint or a PVA glue solution.
- ✗ **NEVER USE HIGH PRESSURE** water spray on ANY asbestos product including walls, fences and roofing.
- ✗ **NEVER USE HOUSEHOLD VACUUM CLEANERS.** Only special H Class Asbestos vacuum cleaners are used by licensed removalists to collect dry asbestos dust and debris.



**PPE and RPE Kits should always be available to workers on the worksite.**

# ASBESTOS PPE 'KIT'

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Wear all items listed in the PPE Kit whenever working with asbestos.
- All items in a disposable PPE Kit must be disposed of as ASBESTOS WASTE after use.

### Wear the PPE in the following order:

1. Disposable coveralls
2. Footwear
3. Shoe covers
4. Gloves
5. Mask
6. Protective eyewear

NOTE: ONLY WEAR old clothes under the coveralls. These should be disposed of with the coveralls after use.

### Disposable coveralls

- Should be rated Type 5, Category 3.
- Be labelled for asbestos use.
- Be one size too big to prevent breaking or tearing when worn.
- Include a hood and elasticised cuffs.
- Cuffs should be pulled over the edge of gloves.
- If the cuffs of coverall arms are loose, seal them with tape to prevent fibres getting in.
- After the shoe covers are fitted, ensure the coverall legs then go over the top of shoe covers.
- After the mask and eyewear are fitted, ensure the hood goes over the mask straps and arms of eyewear, and covers all hair.

### Footwear & shoe covers to be worn over shoes

- NEVER wear boots or shoes with laces as they can't be decontaminated.
- GUMBOOTS are the best option as they are easily wiped clean and have no laces. Once cleaned appropriately they can be re-used for non-asbestos work.
- SHOE COVERS are worn OVER shoes and should cover all of the boot/shoe and be secured above the ankle.
- WHEN shoe covers are secured, pull the cuffs of the coverall legs down to cover the top of shoe covers.

### Gloves

- Use ONLY disposable Latex, Nitrile or neoprene gloves.
- Tuck under the cuffs of coveralls and tape the cuffs if loose.

### Mask (Respiratory Protective Equipment)

- Your mask should be worn at all times when working with asbestos containing materials.
- Minimum P2 (P3 preferred), filter, half face disposable particulate respirator.
- Half face non-disposable particulate respirator with cartridge is preferred but it must be decontaminated after each use.
- The wearer must be clean shaven in the area of the seal.
- All respirators are different shapes and sizes so it's important that the size is correct to properly fit to the wearer's face.
- Ensure your mask fits perfectly by conducting a respirator fit check.
  - Close off inlet to filter with hands
  - Inhale gently
  - Hold for 10 seconds
  - Ensure the face piece remains slightly collapsed

### Protective eyewear

- ALWAYS wear protective eyewear when working with materials that might produce dust.
- After fitting your mask, fit your eyewear and place the hood over the top of the mask straps and eyewear arms.



# STEPS FOR DECONTAMINATION

## HOW TO SAFELY DOUBLE BAG AND SEAL ASBESTOS WASTE AND PPE

1. Carefully place asbestos materials in the 200um plastic bags or wrap using rolls of 200um plastic (drop sheets), seal using duct tape and label **'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'**.
2. Plastic bags containing asbestos should NOT be more than half full to prevent breaking and must be double bagged.
3. Tightly twist the bag opening and fold over to form a 'goose neck'.
4. Secure with heavy duty duct tape or similar to seal.
5. Place each sealed bag inside a second plastic bag labelled **'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'** and seal as you did the first bag with duct tape. This is called 'double bagging'.
6. If using rolls of 200um plastic, carefully wrap items and seal edges of plastic with duct tape. Repeat the process to double wrap materials.
7. Whether using bags or rolls of 200um plastic, all materials must be double wrapped or double bagged, sealed with duct tape and labelled **'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'**.

### IMPORTANT

ALL MATERIALS MUST BE 'DOUBLE BAGGED' USING 200UM PLASTIC BAGS OR 'DOUBLE WRAPPED' USING 200UM PLASTIC ROLLS, SEALED WITH DUCT TAPE AND LABELLED 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE' BEFORE BEING REMOVED FROM THE WORK AREA FOR APPROPRIATE DISPOSAL.

YOU MUST CONTINUE TO WEAR YOUR PPE THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS.

REMOVE YOUR MASK LAST!

## DECONTAMINATING THE WORK AREA

1. Carefully wrap plastic drop sheets and double bag or wrap.
2. Use wet wipes or wet disposable cloths to wipe away any dust from surfaces or tools.
  - Wet wipes/cloths should be used ONCE ONLY.
  - Wet wipes/cloths should be used flat (not wadded).
  - If using cloths, use the bucket of water to wet cloths before use.
  - Never rinse cloths in water and reuse.
  - After use, wet wipes or cloths must be double bagged or double wrapped and seal with duct tape.
3. Carefully wet wipe surfaces and all hand tools or equipment including the bucket. If tools aren't able to be decontaminated they should be discarded as 'ASBESTOS WASTE' or double bagged for later use but ONLY when wearing PPE.
4. Wet wipe the outside of bags before removing bags from the work area.

## PERSONAL DECONTAMINATION

1. Remove any visible asbestos dust from protective clothing by wet wiping with clean, wet wipes/cloths and place a 200um plastic bag.
2. Carefully remove shoe covers, gloves and coveralls and place in a 200um plastic bag.
3. Use wet wipes/cloths to wipe down footwear then place cloths in a plastic bag.
4. Wipe down the outside of all bags with wet wipes/cloths and place in a plastic bag.
5. Remove mask last and place in a 200um plastic bag and seal using the double bag method.
6. Remove old clothing and double bag as you did the other disposable items.
7. Seal all plastic bags using duct tape and the double bag method.
8. Wash hands, nails, face and head thoroughly with soapy water.
9. Shower and wash hair to complete personal decontamination.

### IMPORTANT

WHEN DECONTAMINATING YOURSELF, ALL ITEMS MUST BE DOUBLE BAGGED, SEALED WITH DUCT TAPE AND DISPOSED OF AS ASBESTOS WASTE AS PER THE ABOVE.

**WARNING: There are significant penalties if asbestos or contaminated materials are not managed in accordance with regulations or for dumping asbestos waste.**

- All asbestos waste must be disposed of at an approved landfill disposal site by licensed asbestos removalists, and in accordance with regulations.
- Transport and disposal of asbestos waste must only be carried out in a manner that will prevent the release of asbestos fibres into the atmosphere.



# ALWAYS MANAGE ASBESTOS SAFELY!



## DON'T MESS WITH ASBESTOS

Think Smart. Think Safe. Think [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au)

Download what you need to know to manage asbestos in the workplace safely.

1. NEVER use tools, equipment or any other implement on asbestos materials that may cause the release of uncontrolled airborne asbestos into the atmosphere including:
  - a. Power tools such as drills, angle grinders, circular saws and sanders.
  - b. Brooms or other abrasive implements.
3. NEVER use household/domestic vacuum cleaners when working with asbestos-containing materials or in the decontamination process.
4. ALWAYS (where possible) use manually operated (non-powered) hand tools in combination with wet methods for dust control including:
  - a. Dust control hoods in combination with wet methods.
  - b. Water spraying with PVA solution of asbestos material during work.
  - c. Use gels and pastes to seal asbestos.
  - a. Shadow vacuum with a Class H approved asbestos vacuum. DO NOT USE household/domestic vacuum cleaners.
2. ALWAYS ensure the use of tools and equipment on asbestos materials that may generate airborne asbestos is controlled by being:
  - a. Enclosed.
  - b. Designed to capture or suppress airborne asbestos.
  - c. Used in a way that airborne asbestos is not generated.
  - d. Any or all of the combinations above.

### HAVE YOU BEEN EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS FIBRES?

The Australian Federal Government has created a register to record the details of members of the community who think they may have been exposed to asbestos. If you think you may have been exposed to asbestos fibres either during the course of your employment, at home or in the community, please register your details online. [www.asbestossafety.gov.au](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au)

