

For: Heads of all Establishments/Settings
OCC Managers
Governors/Management Committees
Trade Union Safety Representatives
Intranet

Issue SAB 28
2nd Edition
February 2012

DAMAGED ASBESTOS IN CEILING VOIDS AND INSTALLATION OF CABLING

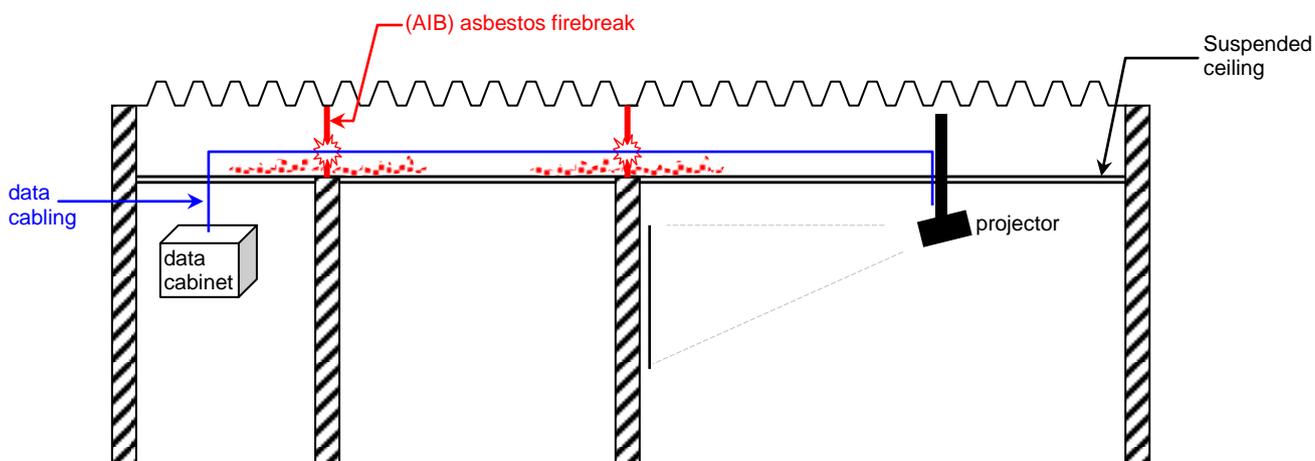
Background

The County Council has in the past used asbestos products in the construction and insulation of its buildings and has consequently had an Asbestos Management Policy in place.



A number of recent incidents have revealed damaged asbestos materials and debris within ceiling voids primarily caused as a result of cabling installations. The asbestos material in all incidents comprised asbestos insulation board (AIB) panels that formed firebreaks above internal partition walls. The AIB panels had been damaged as a result of cutting and breaking through without applying appropriate precautions or controls to ensure safe routing of cables. This practice has resulted in asbestos debris being left within the ceiling void laying on the top surface of ceiling tiles with the damaged board leaving an incomplete fire break which seriously compromises the precautionary fire safety provisions for the building.

Illustration of damage



Example of damaged asbestos following
installation of data cabling

Advice

A Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey/Inspection (formerly a Type 3) must be carried out by a competent surveyor when planning any work and any necessary preparations made before undertaking any work (including rewiring or cabling work) especially within ceiling voids including above fixed or lay-in-grid suspended ceilings.

All work affecting asbestos containing materials must be undertaken by competent contractors and in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and the County Council's Asbestos Management Policy requirements.

What do Heads of Establishment and Managers of Premises need to do if damaged asbestos firebreaks or other asbestos materials are suspected or discovered?



Report the discovery of asbestos and/or details of any damage to Mouchel who will provide competent advice: "Hotline" 0800 731 4617

All employees and other building users should be told about the presence of asbestos and instructed not to lift ceiling tiles. They should also have been made aware of the need to report any damage to asbestos materials.

Any missing tiles or broken tiles should be reported to Mouchel who will arrange for these to be replaced to reduce the amount of air exchange between the ceiling void and room below.

Ceiling voids have the potential to be contaminated including the tops of the tiles. All access to the ceiling void must be strictly prohibited unless Mouchel have been consulted and suitable precautions are in place. Any work that may disturb the ceiling tiles or the void above should be properly assessed and carried out by competent contractors in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.

Make sure you have, and are aware of the contents of, the establishment's own on-site Asbestos Management Folder. Ensure that appropriate information is made available to all staff. For schools, read the HSE information '**ASBESTOS in schools**' (see link below) and follow the guidance given.

For Further Information and Advice:

	Email and web addresses	
Specialist:		
HSE	http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/asbestos.htm	0845 345 0055
Mouchel Hotline		0800 731 4617
General:		
Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team	healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk web address: http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/links/intranet/healthandsafety Intranet guidance:	01865 797222