

Overview of the module

This module will provide you with an awareness of the dangers of asbestos, where you might find it and what to do if you think you have found it.

Objectives of the module

The objective of this learning will enable you to:

- Describe what asbestos is
- Describe the materials that may contain asbestos on London Underground infrastructure
- State the legislation relating to asbestos
- State the health risks associated with asbestos
- Outline your responsibilities when you come into contact with asbestos.

Assessment

You will be assessed on the underpinning knowledge and understanding you have gained by reading the information in this asbestos awareness module.

The assessment is computer based and consists of multiple-choice questions which require you to input the correct answers.

In order to achieve the required standard in the assessment you must answer at least 2 questions correctly out of 4.

You will be able to sit at your own computer to complete this asbestos awareness module.

Your training coordinator will provide you with the necessary log on details in order for you to complete this asbestos awareness module.

Achievement

Your completed assessment result will be electronically recorded, so that your LUCAS smartcard can be updated to show that you have successfully completed this asbestos awareness module.

Support

If you require any support you should email LUCAS@tube.tfl.gov.uk where your question or query will be answered within 24 hours (excluding weekends).

Asbestos

Asbestos is a natural mineral found in rock. Due to its strong and flexible nature it has been used as a building material for over 150 years.

You cannot always tell whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it. Often asbestos is masked by other materials or is dyed, which disguises its true colour.

Remember!

Products that contain asbestos can look identical to those that do not.

The law

Asbestos is banned from use within the United Kingdom; this also includes second hand use of asbestos products, such as asbestos cement sheets.

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 requires those who manage non-domestic premises to protect persons from the risk of ill health and exposure to asbestos. Their duty is to:

- Take reasonable steps to find out if there are materials that contain asbestos, and if so the amount, where it is and what condition it is in
- Assess the risk of anyone being exposed to asbestos fibres from the material identified
- Prepare a plan that sets out in detail how the risks from these materials will be managed
- Implement that plan
- Periodically review and monitor the plan to ensure it is always up to date.
- Provide information on the location and condition of the material to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb it.

Effects to your health

Generally, materials in good condition that contain asbestos are safe. They become dangerous when they are damaged or have deteriorated.

When asbestos is broken down, it releases tiny fibres into the air which, when exposed to over a long period of time can get deep into your lungs.

If the fibres get lodged in your lungs they cannot be broken down by your body's natural defences or coughed out, this can then lead to asbestos related diseases such as lung cancer or asbestosis.

These diseases will not affect you immediately; they can often take a long time to develop.

Asbestos awareness module

Asbestos on LU infrastructure

It is known that various materials used on LU infrastructure contain asbestos, for example:

- Sheathing for cables and washers
- Insulation
- Pit blocks
- Tunnel ring caulking
- Cable troughing
- Corrugated sheeting
- Rope gaskets.



Cable sheathing and washers



Pit block



Corrugated sheeting



Rope gasket



Insulation



Tunnel ring caulking

Surveys are undertaken at:

- stations
- depots
- rented properties
- other locations (for example the track).

These surveys are used to produce risk assessments and set priorities for the appropriate managers.

Your responsibilities

Asbestos products can look similar to asbestos-free materials and can sometimes only be identified under a microscope, so you should always seek assistance before moving any materials that you think may contain asbestos.

When you arrive at site you will be given a briefing. It is your responsibility to understand the briefing, if you do not understand anything you must speak to the site person in charge.

You must avoid disturbing or attempting to remove known materials that contain asbestos at all times.

If you uncover or discover anything that may contain asbestos you must stop any work which may disturb it, and report it to your site person in charge or local manager.

You must not return to an area that contains asbestos until you are told it is safe to do so by the site person in charge.

Always ask your site person in charge if the building you are working in has been checked for asbestos. It is your right to be protected from asbestos at all times.

Any asbestos removal work will only be carried out by a licensed contractor.

Accidental disturbance of asbestos

If you accidentally disturb asbestos you must:

- Stop work immediately and vacate the area
- If possible isolate the area to prevent exposure, for example close any doors
- Notify the local manager or station supervisor
- Ensure that the accidental disturbance is reported through the appropriate incident reporting process.