



Title: Working with Asbestos.	Doc No: OHS-03-50
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### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to guide Rheem service technicians, sub contractors and Service Agents in the correct method of handling asbestos containing materials (ACMs), which may be encountered during hot water plumbing activities, so that exposure to asbestos fibres is avoided.

### **2. Scope**

Normal hot water plumbing activities may require working with asbestos containing materials (ACMs). The three activities which involve ACMs are:


- 2.1. The drilling of holes in ACM to enable gas and water pipes or electricity conduits to pass through the material, and
- 2.2. The repositioning or modification of internal gas flue pipes which contain asbestos.
- 2.3. The removal of existing gas flue pipes.

The scope of this procedure covers the identification of ACMs through to working with ACMs, cleaning the area of any asbestos fibres and properly disposing of asbestos waste.

### **3. Procedure**

#### **3.1. A risk assessment must be carried out prior to the work being carried out.**

The risk assessment needs to include steps to identify if any ACMs are present in the area and to determine if the job can be done professionally without modifying the material. Modifying the material includes drilling through asbestos sheets and moving or cutting asbestos flues. It is preferable that the job be done without modifying ACMs if possible. However it is not acceptable to compromise professional standards by running pipe work in an unsightly manner. If practicable arrange with the customer for the removal and replacement of the ACM prior to doing the job to remove the need to work with ACMs. An explanation to the occupier/home owner needs to occur prior to any work commencing and the area needs to be roped off with barrier tape if there is the possibility of people entering the area(s). For work in a workplace erect barrier tape and signs and restrict access to area. If drilling in an elevated location restrict access to area below.

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### 3.2. Equipment required for drilling holes in ACMs

- a) P2 respiratory protection that complies with AS 1716 and is used in accordance with AS1715 and is appropriate for asbestos removal
- b) Disposable overalls
- c) Gloves
- d) Goggles
- e) Drill- hand or low speed power drill
- f) Drill bit or hole saw
- g) Appropriate hand tools for the task
- h) Labeled asbestos waste bags
- i) 200µm plastic sheet (would require labels if used to wrap ACM, warning label should read: Caution asbestos, do not open or damage, do not inhale dust)
- j) Duct tape
- k) Hand water spray,
- l) Wet wipes (wet rags or alcohol wipes)
- m) For work in a workplace asbestos barrier tape and signs

Kits will be available form the store. Details are as follows,

- Part Number - 890353 - Kit complete with.
  - o Extra large disposable overalls.
  - o Gloves
  - o Face mask
  - o 2 labeled asbestos waste bags.
- Part Number - 890352 - Kit complete with,
  - o Large disposable overalls.
  - o Gloves
  - o Face mask
  - o 2 labeled asbestos waste bags.

The above items are also available separately and the part numbers for them are,

- Gloves 890350
- Extra large disposable overalls 890349
- Large disposable overalls 890348
- Face Mask 890347
- Asbestos waste bag 890346
- Goggles 890351

The disposable overalls face mask and gloves are to be disposed of after each job. Please return the zippered bag to the store for refilling.

Goggles spray bottle and tape will be issued separately.

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### 3.3.Process of drilling holes in ACM

Under Part 8 of the OH&S (Asbestos Regulations 2003) holes can be drilled in ACM using a hand drill or under Regulation 305 a power drill if an enclosure or engineering controls are used to control airborne dust levels to ensure a person is not likely to exceed 0.05 f/ml during the task.

No compressed air or gases can be used within 6 metres of the ACM work area.

This procedure covers work carried out on non friable bonded material in good condition. If the ACM is non-friable then training in maintenance activities is required.

- a) Restrict access to the work area to those involved in the drilling.
- b) Gain access to ACM to be drilled. The work may require the use of a ladder or step ladder, if so the Working Safely with Ladders Procedure (SOP-03-009) must be used.
- c) Visually inspect work area to understand the application of all applicable procedures
- d) Additional lighting may be required
- e) Put in place all necessary equipment for drilling
- f) If able to access rear of drilling location enclose or seal rear of drill site to prevent loose fibre contamination. If you are not able to access the rear of drilling location then the contamination of this location needs to be identified on the site record if it is a workplace, or if domestic premises the owner must be informed.
- g) Cover location to be drilled, front and back where accessible, with tape to capture loose fibres.
- h) Don PPE (disposable coveralls, gloves, goggles and P2 respirator)
- i) Drill through tape carefully
- j) Use wet rags to clean off all visible debris from front and back where accessible
- k) Wet wipe drill area both sides
- l) Final visual inspection to ensure no visible ACM debris or dust
- m) Dispose of asbestos waste into a waste bag and seal by taping and goose necking.
- n) Place bagged ACM into second waste bag.
- o) Decontaminate tools, goggles and boots and place wet rags into second waste bag
- p) Remove coveralls and gloves and place into second waste bag
- q) Remove respiratory protection and place into second waste bag.
- r) Seal bag by taping and goose necking
- s) Transport double bagged ACM to asbestos waste skip as soon as practicable.

**At the end of the job there must be no visible debris dust left in the area and no visible airborne dust generated while carrying out the task.**

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### **3.4. Process of handling gas flue pipes containing asbestos fibres without modifying its length**

Internal gas water heaters may use an ACM for the flue pipe. Many flue pipes terminate in the roof space and can therefore be adjusted in height to facilitate the replacement of the water heater without modifying the pipe. In such cases apply the following procedure:

- a) Restrict access to the work area to those involved in the flue pipe adjustment.
- b) The work may require the use of a ladder or step ladder, if so the Working Safely with Ladders Procedure (SOP-03-009) must be used.
- c) Visually inspect work area to understand the application of all applicable procedures
- d) Loosen any clamps or collars securing the flue pipe
- e) Don PPE (disposable coveralls, goggles, gloves and P2 respirator)
- f) Spray exposed flue pipe with water to dampen the surface.
- g) Slide the flue pipe up or down as appropriate without creating any dust
- h) Secure flue pipe in new location and re seal if needed.

### **3.5. Process of handling gas flue pipes containing asbestos fibres where cutting of the pipe is required.**

If the internal gas flue pipe needs to be cut then the following procedure must be applied:

- a. Restrict access to the work area to those involved in the flue pipe work.
- b. The work may require the use of a ladder or step ladder, if so the Working Safely with Ladders Procedure (SOP-03-009) must be used.
- c. Visually inspect work area to understand the application of all applicable procedures
- d. Mark the location of the cut
- e. Don PPE (disposable coveralls, goggles, gloves and P2 respirator)
- f. Apply tape to the cutting site through 360°
- g. Spray the flue pipe with water to dampen the surface.
- h. Cut the flue pipe using a hacksaw making sure the tape or paste captures any loose fibres and hold the off-cut to prevent it falling
- i. Use wet rags to clean off the tape and all visible debris from inside and outside the flue pipe
- j. Dispose of asbestos waste including off-cut into a waste bag and seal by taping and goose necking.
- k. Place bagged ACM into second waste bag.
- l. Wet wipe cut area
- m. Complete final visual inspection to ensure no visible ACM debris or dust
- n. Decontaminate tools, goggles and boots, and place wet rags into second waste bag
- o. Remove coveralls and gloves and place into second waste bag

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- p. Remove respiratory protection and place into second waste bag.
- q. Seal bag by taping and goose necking
- r. Transport double bagged ACM to asbestos waste skip as soon as practicable.

### **3.6.Process of removing gas flue pipes containing asbestos fibres.**

Internal gas water heaters may use an ACM for the flue pipe. Many flue pipes terminate in the roof space and may need to be removed. In such cases apply the following procedure:

- i) Restrict access to the work area to those involved in the removal of the flue pipe.
- j) The work may require the use of a ladder or step ladder, if so the Working Safely with Ladders Procedure (SOP-03-009) must be used.
- k) Visually inspect work area to understand the application of all applicable procedures
- l) Loosen any clamps or collars securing the flue pipe
- m) Don PPE (disposable coveralls, goggles, gloves and P2 respirator)
- n) Spray exposed flue pipe with water to dampen the surface.
- o) Remove the flue pipe without creating any dust.
- p) Wrap the flue pipe with plastic sheet and tape securely.
- q) Transport wrapped ACM to asbestos waste skip as soon as practicable.

**At the end of the job there must be no visible debris dust left in the area and no visible airborne dust generated while carrying out the task.**

When a technician works on a job that involves asbestos material that needs to be disposed of, the technician is to make arrangements with the Supervisor for the disposal of the bagged ACM. Normally this would involve immediately transporting the ACM to an approved waste disposal depot.

If a flue pipe is removed and is over 2 metres in length, contact the planning room/office to arrange for it to be transported to the disposal depot.

#### **Approved ACM Disposal Depots:-**

Sydney - Plastech (CWDS) 66 Links Rd, St Marys, contact Nhuman - 96230888.

#### **Pricing:-**

Jobs which include working with asbestos need to include an 'asbestos fee' to cover the additional costs involved. Whenever such a job is being quoted refer to local installation schedules for appropriate additional charges.

**End of Procedure**