



# Sunter Ltd Asbestos Strategy

## Introduction

Sunter Limited is a construction company who specialises in the regeneration of domestic housing. We are aware of the responsibilities that we undertake when carrying out our undertakings. To aide this, we have devised this Asbestos Information Strategy so that information can be passed onto all who may on site discover any Asbestos Containing Material (ACM).

General guidance is given on how to deal with any potential situations that become evident.

Please follow all information given in this Strategy and pass on any information gained to others in the work area who may not have seen the Strategy.

## Information, Instruction & Training

Sunter Ltd ensures that all information, instruction, training and guidance is in place prior to any work taking place, this includes

- **Asbestos Surveys:** These are supplied via Clients and are carried out by an independent company who visits the property and carries out a survey to the requirements. There are two main survey types, these are:
  - Management Surveys – where the surveyor visually inspects the property and records all findings
  - Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (R&D) – This survey is more intrusive than the Management Survey as physical samples are taken from any area which potentially contain an ACM. The samples are tested and the finding are recorded in the R&D Survey.
- **Asbestos Awareness Training:** This training is carried out to each person who carries out work on behalf of the company. This allows the person to be competent and aware of the health risks posed by working with an ACM and how to identify any potential suspect material. This training is refreshed annually.
- **Toolbox Talks:** These will be carried out either:
  - Upon site induction, by the Site Manager, or
  - At Sunter Ltd Head Office by the Safety Manager
  - These toolbox talks will work in conjunction and as a refresher to the Asbestos Awareness training given by an external Training Provider.

This Asbestos Strategy will be:

- Given Upon Site Induction to all:
  - Employees
  - Sub-Contractors
  - Visitors
  - Any Other
- Posted in Site Offices
- Form Part of the Site Rules
- Be Included in the Construction Phase Health & Safety Plan

Flow Charts are included in this Strategy as a simple visual way of identifying the procedural routes to be followed. General Information on what, why, when and how Asbestos can and will effect you is included at the end of this Strategy, please take time to refresh yourself with the information provided. Also please take note of the procedures and follow them at all times.

If you are unsure on how to understand this Asbestos Strategy, please call Sunter Limited Health & Safety Manager at:

**Sunter Limited**  
**Unit 14,**  
**Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate**  
**Hetton-le-Hole**  
**Tyne & Wear**  
**DH5 0RH**  
**Tel: 0191 526 8106**

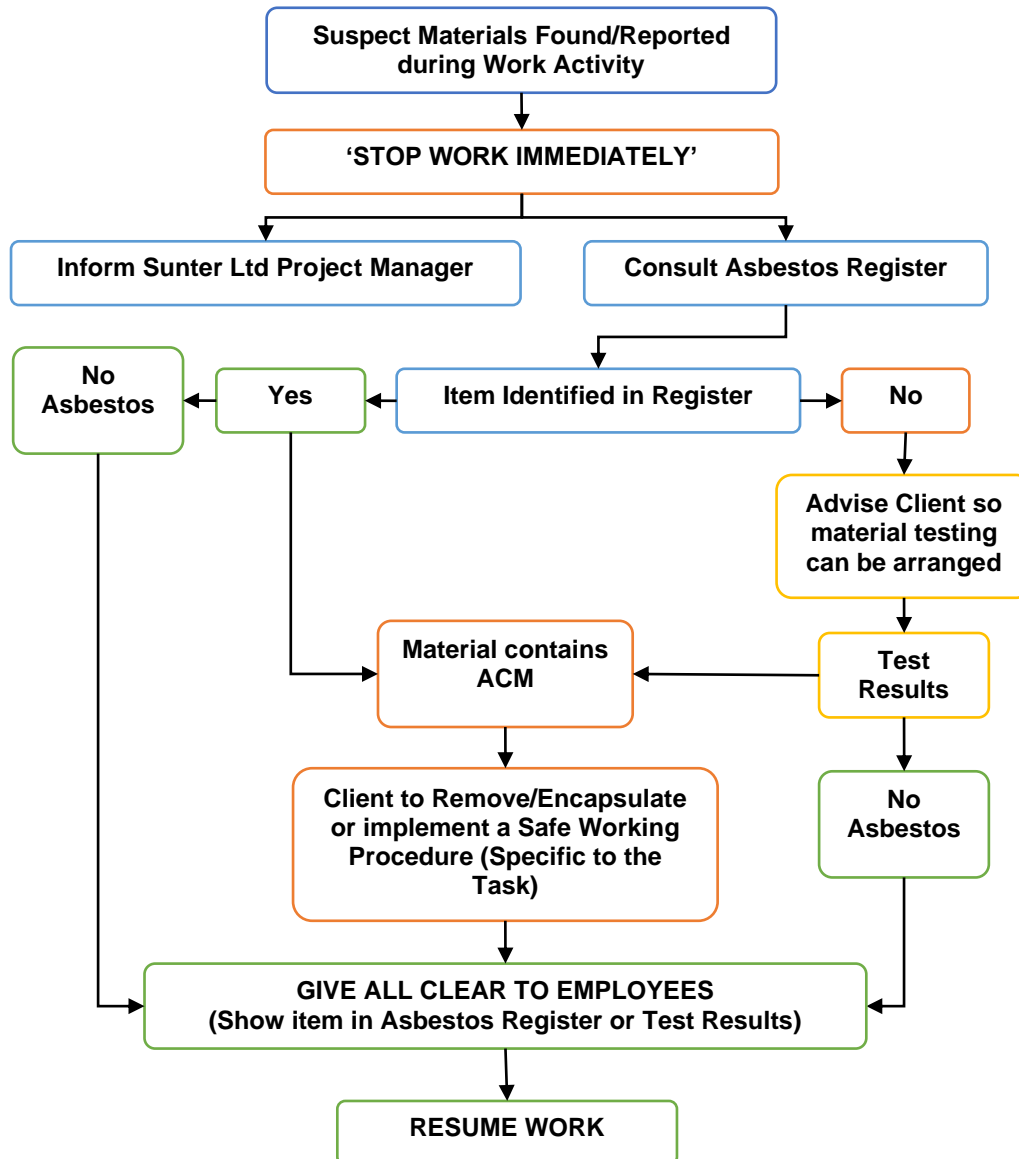


# Sunter Ltd Asbestos Strategy

## Discovering & Reporting of Suspect Materials

If during the process of Works, you discover a material that you may think could contain Asbestos, the following procedure **MUST** be followed at all times:

### **SITE MANAGERS – Process to implement!**



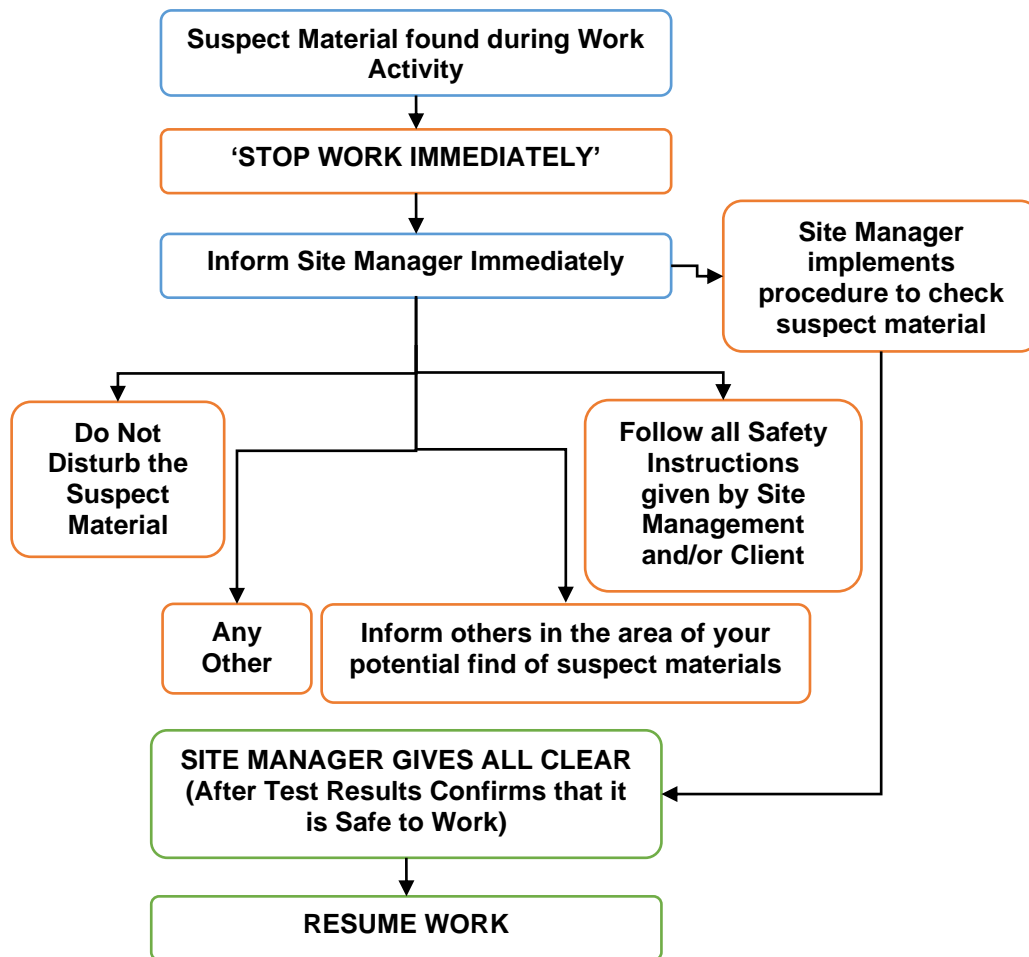
**‘Site Managers will follow the above procedure and report immediately any suspect material to the Project Manager’**

**‘Employees and contractors carrying out any work on site must follow the following procedure so that suitable and sufficient control measures can be implemented immediately’.**



# Sunter Ltd Asbestos Strategy

**EMPLOYEES/ CONTRACTORS ANY OTHER WORKING ON SITE – Process to implement!**



## What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a term used for the fibrous forms of several naturally occurring silicate minerals. The three main types of asbestos which have been commercially used are:

- Crocidolite (often referred to as 'blue asbestos');
- Amosite (often referred to as 'brown asbestos');
- Chrysotile (often referred to as 'white asbestos').

Other forms of asbestos are also found, but are much less common – fibrous Actinolite, fibrous Anthophyllite and fibrous Tremolite. Analysis may detect the presence of these materials, but usually in combination with the more common types.

Five of the fibre types are referred to as amphibole minerals and Chrysotile is often referred to as a serpentine mineral. It is important to remember that the colours are not always a reliable indicator of the type of asbestos and laboratory analysis is required to both confirm the presence of and type of asbestos within a material.

## Is there a safe level?

The risk of developing an asbestos-related disease depends on a number of factors including:

- The cumulative dose received,
- The time since first exposure and
- The type and size of asbestos fibres concerned.

We are all exposed to a background level of asbestos fibres – externally from erosion of rocks/mining and indoors from proximity to asbestos containing materials. The theory that 'one fibre kills' is therefore not borne out by science.

The majority of people now dying from asbestos-related diseases were exposed to asbestos during the 1950's and 1960's, when asbestos use in the UK was at its peak.



# Sunter Ltd Asbestos Strategy

Many of them were employed in the production of asbestos products and in the building trade and were exposed to high concentrations of airborne asbestos fibres at work, often over many years.

Some were exposed due to contact with dusty work clothes from asbestos workers at home. These exposures were not measured as accurately as we are able to do now, so it is not possible to compare past exposures with incidence of the diseases – there is insufficient information to deduce a 'safe' level.

This relationship can be better established as more information about exposures can be compared with incidences of disease. However, the long latency period makes this slow work.

There is usually a long delay between first exposure to asbestos fibres and diagnosis of disease, ranging from 15 to as many as 60 years. Current UK regulations are such that those now knowingly working with asbestos are unlikely to develop asbestos-related diseases, provided they observe the required precautions.

## Asbestos Related Diseases

- **Asbestos Warts:** caused when the sharp fibres lodge in the skin and are overgrown, causing callous-like growth which are benign.
- **Pleural Plaques:** discrete fibrous or partially calcified thickened areas when can be seen on X-rays of individuals exposed to asbestos. They do not become malignant nor normally cause any lung impairment;
- **Diffuse Pleural Thickening:** similar to above and can sometimes be associated with asbestosis. Usually no symptoms shown, but if extensive can cause lung impairment.
- **Asbestosis:** irreversible fibrosis or scarring of the lungs in which the tissue becomes less elastic, making breathing progressively more difficult. This is an industrial disease arising from high levels of exposure to asbestos fibres, including blue, brown and white. There is no risk of asbestosis from normal levels of environmental exposure to asbestos.
- **Lung Cancer:** an increased incidence of lung cancer has been found in people who work with asbestos and research suggests that both lung cancer and asbestosis do exhibit a dose response relationship. The three main types of asbestos can all cause lung cancer, but blue and brown are more dangerous than white. ***It is also important to remember that people who are exposed to asbestos fibres and who smoke are at an even greater risk of developing lung cancer than those who do not smoke.***
- **Mesothelioma:** a cancer of the inner lining of the chest or the abdominal wall. This cancer is generally shown to be due to exposure to asbestos in the workplace or to living in the same house as someone who works with asbestos. The risk of Mesothelioma is not influenced by smoking. Although a threshold has not been established, evidence shows that low/short exposures to asbestos fibres, primarily from blue and brown asbestos, have resulted in disease.

## Persons at Risk

A study carried out by Professor Peto and HSE epidemiologists in 1995 showed that the largest single group of people at risk of coming into contact with asbestos was building and maintenance workers, often accidentally exposed to asbestos containing materials. This group accounts for approximately 25% of the 3,500 annual deaths from asbestos-related diseases. The workers, their own employers and even those in control of the building are often unaware that asbestos was present during maintenance work.

Maintenance and building workers may have breathed in asbestos fibres during their day-to-day work with asbestos materials, or because work with asbestos was carried out near to them. Until recently, it was thought that those now dying from asbestos-related diseases were exposed to large amounts of asbestos, either regularly or during a single spell of work lasting from a few weeks to a few years. It is now thought possible that repeated low-level exposures, such as those that could occur during routine repair work, may also lead to asbestos-induced cancers.

The scientific evidence on exactly what levels of exposure cause disease is unclear, but we do know that the more asbestos fibres are inhaled, the greater the risk to health. That is why it is important that everyone who works with asbestos, or presumed asbestos, should take the strictest precautions.

**Policy Date:** Jan 2022

**Planned Review Date:** Jan 2023

Policy Written by:

Policy Reviewed by:

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Position: Company Director