Introduction to Asbestos Learning Package

A 45-minute lesson to educate students about asbestos and its dangers.

Introduction for lecturers

Asbestos-related diseases account for around 4000 deaths each year, the biggest single cause of work-related deaths in Great Britain. This is more than the number who die in road accidents. Tradespeople, in particular joiners, electricians and plumbers, are at risk.

The number of deaths attributable to asbestos continues to rise and is not likely to peak until around 2015. Although the use of asbestos is prohibited in new buildings, it is still present in buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000. Therefore, your students will come into contact with asbestos if they are carrying out refurbishing work.

Each week, approximately eight joiners, six electricians and four plumbers die from asbestos-related diseases.

This lesson

This resource will introduce asbestos and its dangers to your students – Britain's tradespeople of tomorrow. It will educate them about what asbestos is, where it can be found, how it can harm people and what work tradespeople are allowed to carry out legally.

This pack has been designed to allow you to deliver the key messages about asbestos in a single lesson of around 45 minutes.

The lesson uses a PowerPoint presentation to explain the dangers of asbestos, where it might be found, what action to take and other vital information. At key points throughout the presentation tutors are encouraged to open up the lesson for discussion and to encourage students' input.

Once the lesson has been completed, students should complete the task sheet (also included) by locating on the image where asbestos could be found. There are two task sheets included of varying difficulty that will test how much students have learned.

Lesson plan

Asbestos – The Hidden Killer

Aims and objectives

Students will gain a vital understanding why asbestos is still a risk for them. They will also receive guidance about what to do when they are potentially confronted with asbestos.

Further reading

For more information on asbestos and its dangers, visit www.hse.gov.uk/hiddenkiller.

Encourage students to do the 'Do you know the facts?' quiz to test their understanding following the lesson.

Prior to the lesson

HSE has produced a pocket card summarising key information that can be handed out to the class. We recommend students keep the cards somewhere safe but accessible (in a tool box, for example). To order the free pocket card, please send your order in writing to: hsebooks@prolog.co.uk. Please state the following reference: MISC946 (Introduction to Asbestos Learning Package pocket card).

Before starting the lesson, please ensure that you download the relevant materials, also available from the HSE website. You will need:

- the PowerPoint Presentation: *Asbestos – The Hidden Killer*. This will need to run on Mircosoft PowerPoint 2007; and
- the task sheet: The hunt for asbestos (two versions and lecturer's answer sheet)

Please check that the PowerPoint presentation runs on your IT system. Please also make sure all elements relating to the presentation are kept in the same folder. This will ensure that the film clips linked to the presentation will work. It is strongly recommended that you print out a copy of the presentation, which includes notes – the notes provide a 'script' for the presentation, and you should follow this as a guide.

Learning objectives

- To understand what asbestos is;
- to list the uses of asbestos in the building trade;
- to identify where students may come across asbestos in their work; and
- to explain procedures for dealing with asbestos.

(continues)

Lesson plan

Asbestos – The Hidden Killer (continued)

Starter

Explain to the class that you will be discussing asbestos and its dangers.
Open the PowerPoint presentation and start the slideshow.

After watching the Chris Morgan film on slide two, ask the class the following questions:

1) What do you think about this short film?
2) What does the class already know about asbestos?
3) Does anybody in the class know someone who has been affected by asbestos?

Main body

Work through the rest of the PowerPoint presentation, slide by slide, using the notes at the bottom of the PowerPoint to guide you through the lesson.
During the lesson, encourage your students to engage in short discussions about the topics raised. The presentation notes suggest appropriate points at which you can pause and ask the students questions or seek their opinions.

Plenary

Use the final slide to affirm the lesson's learning objectives. Ensure, above all else, students can remember these key messages:

- Asbestos is dangerous, especially to young people.
- Asbestos can be found in any pre-2000 building.
- If in doubt, stop working and check.
- You can only perform minor maintenance jobs and only if you've been trained.
- Don't put yourself at risk – asbestos is a hidden killer.

Ask your students to note down three key points they think a new tradesperson should know about asbestos.

Task sheet

Hand out the task sheet to the class. Students should be asked, using the knowledge they have gained from the lesson, to complete the task sheet. Using the diagram, students should try to find the possible locations of the listed asbestos materials.

An alternative task sheet has been provided for students you feel may need to be given more of a challenge (this task sheet does not give a list of asbestos-containing materials or hotspots).