



Important News

17th December 2007

All BFFF Health & Safety Contacts

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - MANAGING ASBESTOS

Asbestos is the **greatest single cause of work related deaths** in the UK and it is a priority for HSE to reduce the number of deaths caused by occupational exposure to asbestos.

The British Frozen Food Federation (BFFF) updated the members in November 2006 regarding the revised asbestos regulations that came into force on 13th November 2006. Now over one year on, we felt it would be of benefit to re-highlight the implications of these regulations and update you on some of the useful guidance available.

The regulations brought together the three previous sets of regulations covering the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing. Further guidance on the regulations in detail is available from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/regulations.htm>.

Importantly for people responsible for non-domestic premises, and as such very relevant for the membership, the new regulations include the 'duty to manage asbestos'. This is directed at the people with responsibility for protecting others who work in such premises, or use them in other ways, from the risks to ill-health that exposure to asbestos causes.

Members should be reminded that the 'duty to manage' part of the regulation requires:

- taking reasonable steps to find asbestos-containing materials in premises and checking their condition;
- presuming materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to suppose they do not;
- keeping an up-to-date written record of the location and condition of asbestos-containing materials;
- assessing the risk of exposure to asbestos-containing materials;
- and preparing and putting into effect a plan to manage the risk.

Further guidance on the duty to manage asbestos can be found in the approved code of practice 'The management of asbestos in non-domestic premises'. (L127) available from HSE Books: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l127.htm>

HSE has also published useful web pages on the duty to manage which are available from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/campaign/duty.htm>.

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Safety representatives play an important role in controlling workplace risks and can help to prevent exposure to asbestos. HSE and TUC have developed a guide for safety representatives on asbestos and the new control of asbestos regulations 2006 which is available from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/repsguide.pdf>

Finally, HSE has a series of web pages dedicated to asbestos. These web pages contain a wealth of information on the subject including links to further guidance on specific elements. The HSE web pages are available from the web link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos>

BFFF

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