



What you need to know before renovating or demolishing a building

Asbestos and asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) were commonly used in buildings that were built before 1989 when asbestos was banned in Singapore.

These materials can be found in corrugated roof sheets, ceiling boards, wall partition boards, rubbish chutes, floor vinyl sheets or tiles, pipe insulation and acoustic panels.



Asbestos Hazard

Exposure to asbestos dust during demolition or renovation of buildings can cause fatal lung diseases such as asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer. The diseases usually take 15-30 years to appear after exposure. According to the World Health Organization, more than 107,000 people die each year from asbestos-related diseases resulting from occupational exposures to asbestos. Measures should be taken to prevent exposure to asbestos before any building work is carried out.



Workplace Safety and Health (Asbestos) Regulations

Among other things, the Regulations require an asbestos survey to be conducted by a competent person to ascertain the presence of ACMs before carrying out any building works in buildings built before 1 Jan 1991. Asbestos-removal work shall only be carried out by an Approved Asbestos Removal Contractor. ACMs shall as far as is reasonably practicable, be removed before demolition work starts.

References

1. Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines on Management and Removal of Asbestos
2. Workplace Safety and Health (Asbestos) Regulations 2014 (<http://www.mom.gov.sg>)
3. List of MOM Approved Asbestos Removal Contractor (<http://www.mom.gov.sg>)
4. List of NEA Approved Asbestos Waste Contractor (<https://www.nea.gov.sg>)

Asbestos:

The hidden hazard at workplaces



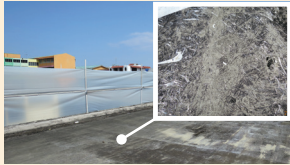
Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACMs)



Roof sheets



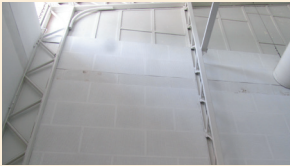
Ceiling boards



Roofing felt



Wall panels



Wall cladding



Ventilation panels or pigeon hole ventilation blocks



Vinyl sheets



Vinyl tiles



Rubbish chute linings



Electrical Insulation board



Pipe insulation



Lift brake pad

You may refer to Annex A of WSH Guidelines on Management and Removal of Asbestos for the list of materials that may contain asbestos.

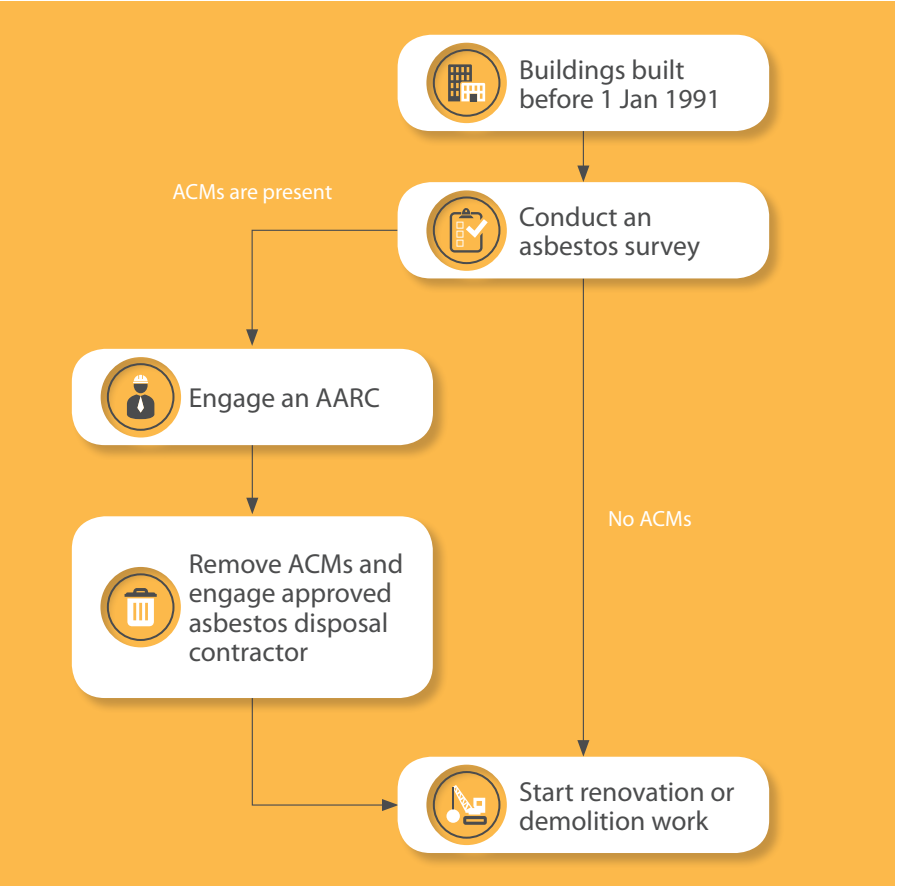
What you need to do?

Before carrying out any renovation or demolition work, check the age of the building.

If the building was built before 1 Jan 1991, you must engage a competent person to conduct a survey to ascertain the presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in the building.

If ACMs are found in the building, you must engage an MOM Approved Asbestos Removal Contractor (AARC) to remove them.

All asbestos waste must be disposed of by NEA Approved Asbestos Disposal Contractors.



To prevent exposure to asbestos, **do not remove** any structure or fittings that are affixed to the building. You must conduct a survey to identify any ACMs in the building. You may start renovation or demolition work only after the identified ACMs have been removed from the building.



DO NOT REMOVE cables and wall fittings.



DO NOT REMOVE doors and windows.



DO NOT REMOVE walls, ceiling or flooring.