


The Asbestosis Research Council

# Recommended Code of Practice

*For Handling consignments of asbestos fibre in British Ports*

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*Factory regulations recognise that industrial disease may arise from the inhalation of asbestos dust. This is mainly a problem within the asbestos industry and the Minister of Labour has clearly stated on 17th April, 1967, that 'there is no recorded case of a docker contracting asbestosis from his work'. It is appreciated however, that apprehension exists among those who are engaged from time to time in such work. In order to reassure them and to eliminate any risk, however slight, the medical and scientific advisers of the Asbestosis Research Council, with the assistance of other experts, have drawn up a code of practice for the packaging and handling of asbestos shipments in the United Kingdom. It is recommended that this code be adopted by all suppliers, shippers and port authorities.*



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# Recommended Code of Practice

## 1
## Scope

This Code of Practice covers the handling in the docks of all types of asbestos fibre which have not been incorporated in a manufactured product.

## 2
## Packaging

2.1. Asbestos fibre of all types should be securely packed in impermeable bags.

2.2. If deliveries are made up into unitized loads, these should be securely fastened by banding and be capable of being moved by hoist, fork lift truck or other mechanical handling device.

2.3. Where additional protection may be necessary, asbestos unitized loads should be further enclosed in a cover of impermeable material and this secured by banding as above.

2.4. If standard international metal containers are used, the shipper should ensure that all projections inside the container are adequately shielded to avoid damage to impermeable bags in transit.

## 3
## Handling

3.1. Hooks or other equipment should not be used in such a way as to damage and therefore unseal the impermeable bags or wrapping of asbestos fibre consignments.

3.2. Unitized loads should be lifted intact to and from ship's holds, and off and on land transport by fork lift trucks or other suitable handling equipment.

## 4
## Precautions During Handling

Should the spillage of asbestos fibre result from accidental damage to the packaging the following precautions should be taken:—



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4.1. Suitable protective clothing should be worn and arrangements made for its cleaning and storage after use. (See 6.2. and 6.3.)

4.2. Respirators of a type approved by the Factory Inspectorate should be worn by those engaged in the collection and rebagging of any loose material caused by damage in handling. (See 6.1.)

4.3. Damaged bags should be overslipped as soon as possible with suitable impermeable bags, a supply of which should be available where asbestos consignments are being handled. The bags should be securely tied, clearly identified and forwarded with the consignment.

4.4. Any remaining spilt material should be finally cleared either by vacuum equipment or, after thoroughly wetting, by sweeping.

## 5
## Conditions of Transport

5.1. Transport facilities which have been regularly used for shipment of asbestos fibre may be contaminated by spillage and in such cases it is recommended that the cargo holds should be thoroughly cleaned —

(a) by vacuum equipment, or

(b) manually by brushing after throughly wetting,

by personnel equipped with respirators and protective clothing as described in 4.1. and 4.2. and the collected material disposed of in impermeable bags.

## 6
## Care and use of Respirators and Clothing

6.1. The approved respirators should be properly maintained and adequate servicing arrangements should be made to ensure that this is done and that employees are not without respirators during maintenance.

6.2. Overalls made from Nylon or other synthetic material and free from open pockets, are recommended as most suitable.

6.3. Protective clothing should be cleaned after use by vacuum cleaner or by washing – overalls should not be shaken, brushed or dusted by a direct air-blast. Clothing which has been used while handling loose asbestos fibre should be placed in suitably marked containers prior to dispatch to laundry.



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The following Codes of Practice have already been published by the Asbestosis Research Council and are available on request:—

*Recommended Code of Practice for Handling Asbestos Products Used in Thermal Insulation* – December 1966

*Recommended Code of Practice for Handling, Working and Fixing of Asbestos and Asbestos Cement Products in the Building and Construction Industries* – April 1967

*Recommended Code of Practice on Precautions to be taken when Cutting, Drilling or Machining Asbestos Cement and Asbestos-based Boards in the Shipbuilding Industry* – June 1967

May 1968

The Asbestosis Research Council

Secretary
Dr S. Holmes
P.O. Box No 40
Rochdale, Lancashire
Telephone: Rochdale 47422



CAPCO KIN 0001150