

## Asbestos issues in Churches: what to spot

### Overview

#### Asbestos in Churches

##### Old (Victorian or earlier)

- organ blowers/motor units
- Fuse boards
- Cement roof tiles
- AIB/cement firebreaks
- rainwater gutters/downpipes

- cisterns/toilet seats
- Electric storage heaters

##### Modern (20th Century) churches

- Spray coatings
- AIB/acoustic panels
- AIB column cladding
- Electric storage heaters

If you have any of the above and are not sure if asbestos is present or not, please contact us immediately to arrange an urgent asbestos survey.

Why not get in touch to find out how we could help you?



**From In the third in our series on asbestos issues in specific building-types, we'll be taking a look at churches, both old and new. As we've written before, a big asbestos-related issue for churches is heating. But there are many other aspects as well. It's important to be aware of asbestos in churches because asbestos management reports are now required by ecclesiastical insurance providers. However daunting the issue might appear at the outset, it's easier than most people think to assess and report on asbestos in churches.**

*Please note: the list below is not exhaustive and we want to hear from you if you've had experience of other issues arising in churches old or new.*

**When you're looking at churches, watch out for potential issues such as:**

#### **Old (Victorian or earlier)**

Old **boiler installations** from the 1930s onwards, including **lagging** to boilers, **gaskets** and **mastic materials** and **pipe insulation** (normally in very poor condition and likely to be debris in floor voids/ducts). This is also present in churches where heating installation has been replaced with modern and the old system has been capped off.

- Asbestos was frequently used as insulation and flexible joint material in **organ blowers/motor units** and **bellows**

- **Fuse boards** – old electrical systems as we find elsewhere in similar buildings
- **Cement roof tiles** where they have replaced existing roofs
- **AIB/cement firebreaks** when installed in the 1960s-1970s to upgrade fire resistance
- **Cement rainwater gutters/downpipes**
- **Resin cisterns/toilet seats** from the last 100 plus years, normally with lead pipework to double the issue!
- **Electric storage heaters** if installed as an upgrade before 1974.

#### **Modern (20th Century) churches**

- **Spray coatings** to ceilings, **AIB/acoustic panels** to walls and ceilings (particularly in high risk areas)
- **Vinyl flooring/floor tiles/bitumen**
- All the usual aspects of modern buildings for example: AIB firebreak/panels, cement roofs/pipework, fuse boards, cisterns and heating installations if in the correct period.
- **AIB column cladding** in 1960s/1970s buildings, especially if CLASP-type construction
- **Electric storage heaters** if before 1974.
- Cathedrals and crematoria will often have similar issues to those listed above, but on a larger scale.

*These lists are not exhaustive and other issues can arise. What experience have you had of dealing with asbestos in churches?*

*We appreciate that dealing with asbestos is just one of many responsibilities you have. That's why we work flexibly around you and your schedule. You might be surprised to see how much easier we make asbestos management.*

**Why not get in touch to find out how we could help you?**