

Guidance on the disposal of bonded asbestos (cement)

Introduction

Asbestos fibres can cause fatal lung diseases and cancers, and must therefore be handled, transported and disposed of properly.

This ESA guidance aims to raise industry standards by bringing about an end to the practice whereby **loads of broken bonded asbestos arrive for disposal at landfill sites unwrapped and in open containers**. This is an entirely unacceptable means for the transport and disposal of asbestos waste, which places landfill staff and the wider community at risk.

Loads presented for disposal in such circumstances should not benefit from a CDG/ADR exemption (by virtue of Special Provision 168) and instead the full ADR rules apply to the packaging and consignment of this asbestos waste. In practical terms, that means that broken asbestos waste must be placed in relevant UN certified packaging and transported for disposal within an enclosed container.

This guidance sets out ESA's expectations on the packaging and presentation of loads of bonded asbestos waste for disposal and the steps landfill operators should take in the event of non-compliant loads arriving for disposal. Bonded asbestos is most often asbestos cement but can also include other items such as floor and roof tiles. The guidance remains under review and will be updated to include further information on the more technical aspects of asbestos waste management, along with additional clarity on key areas of terminology used within various sources of HSE guidance.

Landfill operators, at point of disposal, have a key role to play in setting the standard and influencing changes in behaviour and practices further up the waste asbestos management chain.

CDG/ADR Special Provision 168

SP168 provides an exemption from CDG/ADR (rules on the carriage of dangerous goods) for the transport of asbestos bound in cement, and with [HSE guidance](#) setting out the relevant requirements and providing examples of the types of asbestos to which this exemption applies.

There are some loads in which the SP168 exemption could legitimately apply, such as whole or unbroken asbestos sheets or pipes which have been removed from demolition projects with minimal breakage. There are no specific requirements on the packaging of asbestos material in such cases and standard practice is to either place sheets in a lined container and wrap as a parcel, or wrap sheets and place in an unlined container.

However, while ESA Members work hard with customers to ensure that loads are delivered in line with site standards there nonetheless remains instances where asbestos waste arrives at landfill sites broken, unwrapped in open containers, or mixed with general C&D waste.

In such cases, waste asbestos can no longer be considered "fixed in a natural or artificial binder in such a way that no escape of hazardous quantities of respirable asbestos fibres can occur during

carriage” (a condition for exempting the transport of bonded asbestos under SP168) and therefore ADR rules for fibrous asbestos apply. This includes bonded asbestos either broken or in a poor condition. Unfortunately, many within the asbestos management chain appear under the misapprehension that SP168 provides a blanket exemption to all loads of bonded asbestos wastes, regardless of its condition.

The ADR requirements for loads of fibrous asbestos are explained in [HSE guidance](#), and summarised as follows:

- asbestos waste must be properly packaged in relevant UN certified packaging (usually double bagged in red inner and clear outer polythene bags that are tested and certified)
- properly consigned as specified in CDG/ADR
- carriage documentation required if load exceeds the load limit exemption (this will likely be exceeded by most container loads of waste asbestos)
- transported in a closed container. This means a totally enclosed container having a rigid roof, rigid side walls, rigid end walls and a floor. ADR is quite clear that open containers, and those covered by a tarpaulin, are not permitted for the transport of this type of asbestos waste.

It is worth noting that there is no quantifiable threshold for determining if asbestos waste is “broken” or in “poor condition”. ADR rules apply to any waste “where the escape of hazardous quantities of respirable asbestos fibres can occur during carriage”. While a review and update of this ESA guidance aims to assist with additional clarity on key terminology it will likely remain a judgment call for landfill site operators upon initial assessment of loads of asbestos waste at the weighbridge.

Responsibilities:

Responsibilities relating to the disposal of bonded asbestos (cement) waste falls to three main parties: the waste producer, the waste carrier and the disposal location (in practice, the producer and carrier may often be one and the same). The key responsibilities are highlighted below.

Producer:

- Present asbestos waste correctly. As a minimum bonded asbestos waste should be wrapped or in a lined container, but (as above) full ADR rules apply to broken asbestos (ie asbestos in a poor condition).
- Use a container appropriate to whether the asbestos waste is transported under SP168 or consigned under ADR
- Use a licensed waste carrier
- Correctly consign as hazardous waste (see [guidance](#) on producer responsibilities for hazardous waste consignment notes)

Carrier (transport):

- Transport asbestos in a container appropriate to whether it is transported under SP168 or consigned under ADR
- [Hazardous waste consignment notes](#) are correctly completed and carried by the driver at all times

- Ensure that any required paperwork, marking and labelling is readily available/visible to the enforcing authorities in the event the vehicle is stopped for inspection during the journey. If using SP168, it should be clear why this applies
- Provide additional PPE for drivers - disposable overalls, overshoes and gloves. FFP3 disposable dust masks which are correctly face fitted (see [INDG479](#) for guidance) (note: PPE requirements may vary depending on site H&S procedures)

Disposal:

- Licensed site
- PPE for drivers (as specified above) put on before tipping commences and disposed of with the waste material - other standard PPE, for example a hard hat or safety goggles will also be required
- Fully completed Waste Duty of Care paperwork (including [Hazardous Waste Consignment Note](#)) with waste correctly categorised
- Visual inspection at the weighbridge to confirm correct presentation / containment for waste type where possible
- Visual check at point of disposal to confirm compliance (e.g bagging / wrapping, waste type). Non-compliances reported to site manager.
- Asbestos waste is covered as soon as possible after tipping - all asbestos waste is covered before site closes
- Written procedures in place for dealing with non-compliant loads e.g:
 - rejecting load if identified prior to tipping;
 - waste removed or covered as soon as possible;
 - quarantine;
 - informing the producer / carrier
- Means for damping available in the event of damaged sheets / split bags

Minimum standards for receiving bonded asbestos at landfill sites

Acceptable

- Whole/unbroken pieces of bonded asbestos or large pieces with minimal breakage wrapped in 'parcels' within a lined container.
- Asbestos waste consigned under and compliant with ADR

Not acceptable

- Broken unbagged asbestos
- Large bonded asbestos sheets loose and unwrapped within open container.
- Broken asbestos waste transported in open skips/containers. It is not acceptable to throw sheeting over a standard skip.

To confirm, full ADR rules apply to loads of broken asbestos (ie bonded asbestos in a poor condition).

If a load is received on site that does not meet the minimum standards, the waste has not been transported compliantly. ESA Member landfill operators have a duty of care and moral obligation to ensure that bonded asbestos waste received at our facilities is transported compliantly.

LOADS THAT DO NOT MEET THE MINIMUM STANDARD SHOULD BE QUARANTINED AND THE HSE/ENVIRONMENT AGENCY INFORMED (REFER TO THE SITE MANAGER FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE). THE WASTE CARRIER SHOULD BE INFORMED THAT FUTURE LOADS WILL BE REJECTED.



Appendix: Bonded asbestos (cement) disposal site - self audit / checks

Arrival - Weighbridge Checks			
Question	Response		Actions
Has the material arrived in the required packaging and container for the type of asbestos?	Yes		None
	No		Ask why? Some waste types i.e. contaminated soils could be transported in open containers - confirm with site / operations manager
Is the Duty of Care (Waste) paperwork correctly completed	Yes		None
	No		- Vehicle instructed to park up and site / operations manager contacted - Site / operations manager contacts producer / carrier to attempt to resolve / correct any errors - Load quarantined (if facility allows) or returned to producer
Is the driver carrying the minimum PPE required for tipping asbestos (disposable coverall, FFP3 mask, overshoes, gloves)?	Yes		None
	No		- Issue correct PPE (first time) - Remind carrier/customer of responsibilities under this guidance - Notify carrier/customer that a repeat will incur recharge or refusal to tip
Discharging			
Question	Response		Actions
Has the driver ONLY exited from the vehicle? / Is the area clear of other vehicles / people?	Yes		None
	No		Mobile plant operator instructs non-driver to return to cab and escalates to site / operations manager as a safety concern

Has the driver put on required PPE before leaving the vehicle cab (disposal coverall, FFP3 mask, overshoes, gloves)?	Yes		None
	No		Mobile plant operator instructs driver to don correct PPE. Refusal to do so is escalated to site / operations manager and load cannot be tipped
Is the asbestos cement waste correctly presented and contained for the type of asbestos? (Observed by the mobile plant operator from inside air filtered cab - periodic 'audit' by site / operations manager)	Yes		None
	No		• Waste covered • Non compliance escalated to site / operations manager and producer / carrier notified (first time) • Repeat non compliance from producer / carrier load is rejected
Are the sheets intact / bags undamaged?	Yes		None
	No		Damp down