



Unit 9, Mitchell Point, Ensign Way, Hamble-le-Rice, Southampton, Hampshire, SO31 4RF

Tel: 023 8098 2598

Email: office@artisansurveyors.co.uk

Web: www.artisansurveyors.co.uk

How to take samples for asbestos analysis

If you are planning to take any samples for asbestos analysis please pay special attention to the following.

- Only you should be in the room when sampling is accomplished.
- Do not disturb the material any more than is required to take a small sample.
- If the material is insulation or sprayed coating then you **MUST NOT** take the samples yourself, call a qualified surveying company who will take them for you.

Before you start ensure you have the correct equipment to take the sample, these kits are available from our website or any respectable asbestos industry retailer, or alternatively items can be sourced individually.

- a. Fully sealing/zip seal bags (2 per sample)
- b. Plastic disposable sheeting to cover surfaces immediately below the sampling location.
- c. Wet wipes
- d. Duct tape or strong tape to cover sampled area (not included in kit)
- e. Knife or pliers to take samples with (not included in kit)
- f. Disposable overalls and gloves (PPE)
- g. Disposable mask (with a P3 filter) (RPE)
- h. Asbestos waste sacks

Once you have the correct equipment then follow these steps to sample the material:

1. Open any windows to allow airflow into the area the sampling will take place.
2. Put on all Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE).
3. Place plastic sheeting on the floor / surface below and surrounding the area to be sampled (it may help to sample from a partially damaged area of the material).
4. Using either a PVA solution or water spray (fairy liquid is adequate); soak the area to be sampled (not required for textured Artex coating).
5. If using pliers for a board or flat material, place a wet wipe between the teeth of the pliers and take a small piece of the material from an edge or corner and fold the wet wipe over the sample.
6. Take two bags, place the sample into one bag and seal it. On the second bag clearly write the sample location and what the material is. Place the bagged sample into the second bag and seal. Once all the samples have been double bagged and labelled, place all the double bagged samples into one larger bag and seal.



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7. Seal the area from which the sample was taken with tape or paint. Clean the pliers and sheeting with a wet wipe and water. Dispose of the sheeting and any used products using the same double bagging method as above, however please use the clearly marked asbestos waste sacks. These can be taken to a local amenity waste site and placed in their asbestos waste skip (call ahead to ensure this is possible). *If your local amenity waste site will not accept the waste, then please call us for further information.*

If sampling textured coating please follow steps 1-3 above then:

4. (you do not need to wet this material)
5. Using a chisel or similar item scrape off the top layer of textured coating (this may be under a thick layer of paint) catching it in a zip seal bag. Then follow steps 6 & 7 above.

Use a damp cloth/paper towel or wet wipe to clean up any material on the outside of the bags or any material that may have spilled onto the floor. NEVER USE A VACUUM TO CLEAN UP ASBESTOS.

Wash hands after sampling.

How much do you need to sample

If you are sampling textured coating it is recommended that 1 – 2 samples are taken for each occurrence of the material i.e. per room if multiple ceilings throughout property. We also recommend that 2 sample locations be used per sample to allow for an accurate analysis to take place. Each sample size should be between 2 – 5 cm².

If you are sampling cement or other materials then 1 sample with a size of 2 – 5 cm² is sufficient, as these material are homogenous and will give an acceptable result for the whole material area. Unless it's a large building such as a warehouse roof, in which case 2-3 samples should be sufficient.

Sending the samples

Once all samples have been taken, bagged and individually labelled then place the samples into a sturdy envelope, ensuring you enclose the sampling booking form listing of all the sample types and locations, your contact details (name, address, telephone number and e-mail address). Please make sure the package is weighed and measured before posting to us, as it will most likely be heavier than a first class stamp. If you have purchased a kit online your sampling costs are included, if you have not, please call the office to make payment over the phone.

Once the results have been received we will e-mail you a PDF copy of the Fibre Identification Certificate relating to the samples you have sent us. This is generally within 48 hours of receipt of the sample, but please allow up to 4 days at busy times. If you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact us.