

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROPER TRAINING IN MATTERS OF PREVENTION OF THE WORKER WITH EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, in Spain, asbestos and the use of asbestos-containing products are forbidden since December 2001 (ahead of the maximum period foreseen by the EU), through the Ministerial Order [1] approved on December 7th, 2001 (direct transposition of the Directive 1999/177/CE), which modifies Annex I of Royal Decree 1406/1989, of November 10th, which imposes limitations on the marketing and use apply of certain dangerous substances and preparations. This prohibition affects both the storage of asbestos, as well as the transformation and the use of it.

This change made by legislation enacted as a result of the classification of asbestos as a category 1 for carcinogenicity (C1), in accordance with the provisions of the Royal Decree 363/1995, of March 10th, which approves the Regulation on notification of new substances and classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances. Nevertheless, until the entry into force of Royal Decree 1299/2006 [2], the list of asbestos-related occupational diseases was not established.

The promulgation of Royal Decree 396/2003 [3], of March 31st, was the first specific regulation on minimum health and safety requirements for the protection of workers from risks resulting from exposure to asbestos, which allowed the establishment of specific guidelines in the field of Occupational Risk-Prevention in asbestos-related works. In accordance with this regulation, the obligation to establish preventive planning in those asbestos-related work is determined.

Similarly, article 13rd of Royal Decree 396/2003 [3] also contains the obligation to include contents and recommendations for safe work practices for handling asbestos in the workers' training manuals [4]. UNE 17130-1:2014 Standard [5] establishes the schedule of training for the safe work practices for handling asbestos and asbestos-related products, as shown in Table 1.

	Previous training	First refresher training	Awareness training	Refresher training
Employer and Manager	20 hours	6 hours	6 hours	20 hours
Supervisor	20 hours	6 hours	6 hours	20 hours
Staff / Employee	20 hours	6 hours	6 hours	20 hours

Table 1. Estimated length of the training course for safe work practices for handling asbestos according to UNE 17130-1:2014 Standard; being, **previous training**: before the first intervention and exposure to asbestos, **first refresher training**: the one carried out after a maximum of 6 months after having received the previous training, **awareness training**: yearly or whenever there are changes in the work procedures, **refresher training**: when more than a year has passed since the last time you worked with asbestos. Source: Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo.

As can be observed, the regulation of asbestos-related work is increasingly demanding, so it is necessary to establish specific training protocols for workers to ensure their safety. As an approach to this, the qualification of workers with specialized training of this carcinogenic material is established.

On the other hand, in addition to requiring firms that handle with asbestos to be listed in the Registry of Firms with Risk of Asbestos (RERA, for its acronym in Spanish), it is necessary a very rigorous protocol regarding the planning of the works and the consideration of collective and individual protection actions according to their nature and the risks to which workers will be exposed.

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