

## Leaving decommissioned asbestos pipe in excavations

**If you comply with the requirements below, we will allow decommissioned asbestos pipe to be left in excavations.**

### Background

Water companies replace asbestos pipes either when they become damaged or as part of a pipe work replacement scheme.

This is done by:

- Pipe bursting - where the pipe itself is not excavated, but the new pipe is pushed in and pulled through the old pipe from two excavated access points. This may result in some cracking or breaking, but the pipe fragments are contained by the soils and left in the ground.
- Offline relay - where the ground is excavated and the new pipe work is laid adjacent to the decommissioned asbestos pipe work. The excavation is then in-filled.

The old pipe has been taken out of use and is waste. Leaving the pipe in the ground would therefore be a disposal operation requiring a permit. Alternatively, it should be removed and disposed of in accordance with the Hazardous Waste Regulations at a suitably authorised site.

No exemption from the need for an environmental permit is available.

### Our position

We will not pursue an application for an environmental permit for leaving decommissioned asbestos pipe in excavations provided:

- Any excavated sections or broken pieces of pipe that are not fully contained are removed from the site and consigned in accordance with Hazardous Waste Regulations
- The water company maintains records of the condition and location of asbestos cement pipes and supplies these records to any person likely to work on disturbed pipes on request.
- You manage the disposal of any redundant asbestos cement pipe or pipeburst material as hazardous waste when they are exposed by future activity.

- You meet the relevant objectives of the Waste Framework Directive; '... ensuring that waste management is carried out without endangering human health, without harming the environment and in particular:
  - (i) without risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals;
  - (ii) without causing a nuisance through noise or odours; and
  - (iii) without adversely affecting the countryside or places of special interest.'

This position does not affect any other statutory requirement applicable to the way in which asbestos pipes are dealt with.

### **Enforcement**

In not pursuing an application for a permit, this means we will not normally take enforcement action unless the activity has caused, or is likely to cause, pollution or harm to health. For a more detailed explanation of this enforcement position, please refer to our **Enforcement and Sanctions Statement**. This document can be found on the 'How we regulate you' page in the Business & Industry section of our website.

This regulatory position will be reviewed by 30 September 2013

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