

Asbestos Fact Sheet

Asbestos was mined in Australia for over 100 years and Australia was the highest user of asbestos per person in the 1950's.

Products that may contain Asbestos

The most accurate way to determine if your fibro contains asbestos is to arrange for a licenced asbestos removal contractor to inspect and test it. You cannot tell by just looking at the material.

Only fibro products made before 1987 contain asbestos. In NSW the use of asbestos was discontinued in fibro sheets by 1982, in corrugated sheets by 1984, and in all other products by 1986.

The manufacture and use of asbestos in products was banned nationally from December 2003.

Common Asbestos Uses

- Cement sheeting fibro;
- Drainage and flue pipes;
- Roofing, guttering and flexible building boards e.g. villa-board, Hardiflex etc.;
- Brakes, clutches and gaskets;
- In the 1960's and 70's loose fibre asbestos were used in some parts of NSW as home roof insulation.

Health Problems from Asbestos

Asbestos is a known carcinogen. The inhalation of asbestos fibres can cause mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestos's. Asbestos poses a risk to health by inhalation whenever asbestos fibres become airborne.

- This can be through cutting or drilling of asbestos containing products or by water blasting roofs which contain asbestos sheeting.
- The symptoms of the above mentioned disease do not usually appear until about 20-30 years after the first exposure to asbestos.

Licensing Requirement for Removing Asbestos

- A bonded asbestos licence AS2 is required to remove more than 10m² of bonded asbestos. Refer WorkCover link.

- A Friable asbestos licence AS1 is required to remove friable asbestos (broken/powdered burnt Asbestos product) refer to WorkCover link.

Legislative requirements Asbestos

NSW WorkCover - Deal with the handling and storage of asbestos at worksites (OH&S Regulation)

Council, NSW WorkCover and NSW EPA (Environment Protection Authority) - the responsible Authorities for the storage, disposal and transport of asbestos at non-worksites (Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997) (and Contaminated Land Management Act 1997).

You must comply with the following in regards to Asbestos:

- Waste must be stored on a premises in an environmentally safe manner.
- Bonded asbestos* material must be securely packaged at all times.
- Friable asbestos* material must be kept in a sealed container.
- Asbestos-contaminated soils must be wetted down.
- All asbestos waste must be disposed of at a landfill site that can lawfully receive this waste.
- It is illegal to dispose of asbestos waste in domestic garbage bins.
- It is also illegal to re-use, recycle or illegally dump asbestos products.

Disposal

Prior arrangement is to be made with Council's waste facility operator prior to transporting asbestos to any waste disposal depot.

*bonded asbestos material means any material (other than friable asbestos material) that contains asbestos.

*friable asbestos material means any material that contains asbestos and is the form of a powder or can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry.



Useful Links

Location of asbestos in and around the home and how best to manage it

www.asbestosawareness.com.au (screenshot below)

Fibro and Asbestos – A Renovator and Homeowner's Guide NSW

www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/fibro_and_asbestos_renovator_homeowner_guide_0315.pdf

NSW Health Do It Yourself

(DIY) Safe - www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/diy/Pages/default.aspx

NSW Health Safe Renovation Practice

www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/diy/Pages/safe-renovation-practice.aspx

NSW Health Asbestos and Health Risks Factsheet Asbestos fibres can pose a

risk to health if airborne, as inhalation is the main way that asbestos enters the body.

www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/asbestos-and-health-risks.aspx

Working with Asbestos: Guide

www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/working_with_asbestos_guide_5484%5b1%5d.pdf

EPA Safety disposing of asbestos waste

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/waste/asbestos/asbestosweb.pdf It is illegal to dispose of asbestos waste in domestic garbage bins.

Bonded Asbestos Factsheet - WorkCover Authority of New South Wales

www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/fact_sheet_bonded_asbestos_5228.pdf

The screenshot shows the homepage of www.asbestosawareness.com.au. At the top, it says "Renovating? Think Smart. Think Safe. Think [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://www.asbestosawareness.com.au) it's not worth the risk!". A banner on the right says "November is Asbestos Awareness Month". The main content area features a video player with the title "What You Need to Know!" and a list of key points: "You can't tell whether building materials contain asbestos just by looking at them", "If you are in doubt, it is best to assume that you are dealing with asbestos and take every precaution", "The safest way to manage the removal of asbestos is to hire a licensed asbestos removal contractor", "Where asbestos fibres are loose and not bonded into building materials, you should use a professional licensed asbestos removal service", and "There are government regulations and your local council may also have policies regarding the removal of asbestos". A navigation menu on the left includes links for "home", "understanding asbestos", "dangers of asbestos", "asbestos in the home", "asbestos disposal & legalities", "faq and learn more", "downloads", "gallery", and "print". At the bottom, there are social media sharing options (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube) and a "BETTY" logo with links for "about", "partners", "useful links", "terms of use", and "contact".

