

## T2 GUIDE

# A TRADIE'S GUIDE TO SAFE PRACTICES IN MANAGING ASBESTOS IN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES



Asbestos-containing materials can be found in any Australian home built or renovated before 1990. Thousands of different types of products remain hidden dangers in 1 in 3 homes including brick, weatherboard, fibro, clad homes, apartments and buildings such as garages, farm structures and in commercial properties if constructed or refurbished before 1990. It could be anywhere!

### PLAY IT SAFE IN THE WORKPLACE & MINIMISE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS FIBRES!

Many tradespersons, workers and labourers can expect to encounter asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in their day-to-day work so Tradies need to think smart, think safe, think asbestosawareness.com.au!

Because it's not worth the risk!

Was the home built or renovated prior to 1987? If asbestos is sealed and in good condition it doesn't pose a health risk to tradies or homeowners. However, without knowing where asbestos-containing products might be located in homes and how to manage asbestos safely, Tradies risk disturbing asbestos and releasing fibres that could be inhaled and can cause serious asbestos-related diseases.









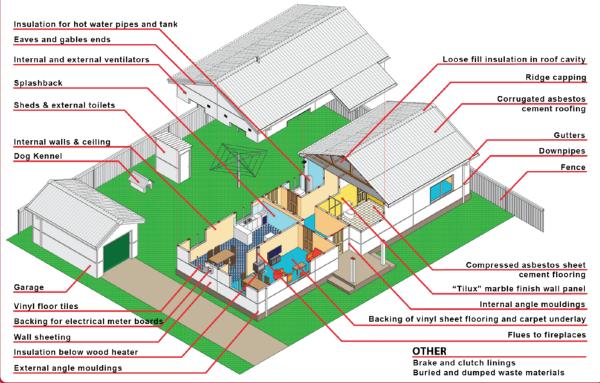






## 1 IN 3 AUSTRALIAN HOMES CONTAIN ASBESTOS!

O YOU KNOW WHERE ASBESTOS COULD BE IN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES?















## WHICH TRADIES & WORKERS ARE MOST LIKELY TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH ASBESTOS ON THE JOB?

- Bricklayers
- Builders
- Building construction and civil construction workers
- Building maintenance workers
- Carpenters
- Home handymen
- Installers of external cladding
- Joiners
- Landscapers
- Layers of floor covering and floor sanders (stripping carpets)
- Painters and wallpaper hangers
- Plumbers and drainers
- Electricians
- Roofers
- Tilers
- Fencers
- Installers of solar panels
- Installers of kitchens and bathrooms and those removing old kitchens and bathrooms.

Other trades that may come into contact with asbestos in the home building and maintenance workplace include:

- Landscapers (buried asbestos)
- Heating and air conditioning installers and maintenance workers
- Gas fitters
- Roof and guttering installers
- Telecommunications technicians (installing cabling)

- Insulation installers
- Demolition workers
- Farmers & farmhands in rural areas
- Rubbish removalists (asbestos illegally placed in bins)
- Waste disposal facility workers as green waste and recycling waste can sometimes contain asbestos and land fill operators.













## IMPORTANT

DO NOT ENTER CEILING SPACE OR SUBFLOOR AREAS OF PROPERTIES LOCATED IN COUNCIL REGIONS THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS LOOSE-FILL REGIONS.

To check if your residential worksite is located in an affected area, contact the Council, NSW Fair Trading or the A.C.T. Government.



## WHAT TYPES OF ASBESTOS MIGHT BE FOUND IN HOMES?

There are two types of asbestos building materials: "non-friable" and "friable".

**Non-Friable Asbestos** is any material (other than friable asbestos) that contains asbestos. Non-friable asbestos cannot be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry.

- Products containing non-friable asbestos can be found anywhere!
  Common uses in residential buildings include: asbestos cement (AC)
  sheeting (fibro) which may be flat or corrugated that was used internally
  and externally as roofing, fencing, wall and floor coverings, for water
  drainage and guttering, flue pipes and in wet or high temperature areas.
- Asbestos products don't need to be removed if sealed, in good, stable condition and left undisturbed, because they are unlikely to release dangerous fibres posing health risks.

**Friable Ashestos** is any material containing asbestos in the form of a powder or can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry.

- Friable asbestos was mainly used in industrial applications but non-friable asbestos can become friable if damaged, unsealed and exposed to weather.
- ONLY Class A Licenced Asbestos Removalists can remove friable asbestos.

**Loose-fill (Mr Fluffy)** asbestos insulation was installed in ceilings in some homes in NSW and the ACT between 1968 and 1979. It was made of crushed, loose (friable) asbestos and then pumped (and possibly spread) into the ceiling space as insulation. If disturbed it could migrate to wall cavities and sub-floor areas. However the risk of exposure to asbestos in buildings containing loose-fill asbestos is likely to be very low if the asbestos is undisturbed and sealed off.

- If you are working in NSW or the A.C.T., NEVER enter ceiling or sub-floor space before contacting Council to see if the property is located in an area affected by Mr Fluffy.
- Contact Council, NSW Fair Trading www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au or the A.C.T. Government www.act.gov.au to check if a property might be located in an affected Council region before entering ceiling or sub-floor space!













## WARNING

ONLY TRADIES WHO'VE UNDERGONE ASBESTOS AWARENESS AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING CAN WORK WITH ASBESTOS MATERIALS.

CONTACT THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY IN YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY TO FIND A REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION.



## TRADIES MUST MINIMISE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS FIBRES!

Before commencing any work, renovations or refurbishments to residential properties, Tradies and workers must determine if asbestos containing materials are present to ensure they minimise the risks to their health and the health of colleagues, families and bystanders.

Follow the **20 Point Safety Checklist for Tradies** (Fact Sheet T1) and use the **Residential Asbestos Checklist for Tradies** to assist in identifying the many various types of asbestos-containing products and where they might be located in homes.

**DOWNLOAD** the *20 Point Asbestos Safety Checklist and Residential Asbestos Checklists* at asbestosawarness.com.au or contact the relevant trade association for guidelines.



## WHEN TO GET THE PROFESSIONALS IN!

IF ASBESTOS PRODUCTS NEED TO BE REMOVED, IT'S RECOMMENDED THAT TRADIES USE LICENCED ASBESTOS REMOVALISTS TRAINED TO REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF ASBESTOS SAFELY.

The cost of engaging a professional licenced asbestos removalist is comparable to other licenced tradespersons including electricians, plumbers and tilers.













#### WHO SHOULD REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS?

While Tradies trained in Asbestos Awareness and Management may work with or remove small amounts of asbestos, the removal of asbestos-containing materials is best done by the professionals.

### LICENCED ASBESTOS REMOVALISTS SHOULD REMOVE ASBESTOS MATERIALS.

There are 2 types of Asbestos Removal Licences: Class A and Class B.

- Class A Licence can remove all types of asbestos including Friable (crumbly material).
- Class B Licence can only remove non-friable (solid) asbestos materials.

Regulations about asbestos removal vary from state-to-state. Visit **asbestosawareness.com.au** to ensure you follow regulations.

### WARNING

THERE ARE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT, ITS REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL WHICH CAN VARY FROM STATE TO STATE. CHECK WITH COUNCIL OR STATE OR TERRITORY AUTHORITY FOR LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

## FOLLOW THESE DO'S & DON'TS TO MANAGE ASBESTOS SAFELY

### 2'00

- ✓ **PLAN** your job in advance so you have all the necessary equipment on hand.
- ✓ WEAR Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times
- ✓ **ENSURE** no electrical wiring or electrical products are in the work area.
- ✓ PREPARE your equipment and work area before you start.
- ✓ **ONLY** wear old clothes under the coveralls. These should be disposed of when the job is completed.
- ✓ **COVER** removal area in 200um plastic drop sheets to catch any fibres, dust and debris.
- **WET** the area that contains asbestos using a gentle mist spray of water before commencement. Detergent added to the water helps improve absorption or a mix of 1 part PVA glue to 5 parts water will help bond the material to minimise any dust.
- ✓ **CONTINUE** wetting asbestos that is exposed If you can see it, wet it!
- ✓ **SPRAY** using a spray bottle to wet smaller areas.
- LOW-PRESSURE constant spray mist using a garden hose with a mist nozzle can be used to wet larger areas outdoors such as external walls or fences.
- ✓ **MINIMISE** the number of people in the work area.
- ✓ **DECONTAMINATE** yourself, the work area and equipment when work is completed.

## DON'TS

- ➤ NEVER CREATE dust.
- NEVER BREAK asbestos sheeting.
- NEVER WORK in windy conditions.
- NEVER USE POWER TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT that can produce dust unless you follow the recommended best practice industry guidelines.
- ➤ NEVER USE BROOMS OR BRUSHES except for sealing if using paint or a PVA glue solution.
- NEVER USE HIGH PRESSURE water spray on ANY asbestos product including walls, fences and roofing.
- NEVER USE HOUSEHOLD VACUUM CLEANERS.

  Only special H Class Asbestos vacuum cleaners are used by licenced removalists to collect dry asbestos dust and debris.

### WARNING

NEVER WORK ON DRY OR FRIABLE ASBESTOS. FOR AREAS THAT CAN'T BE WET DOWN PRIOR TO REMOVAL, ENGAGE A LICENCED ASBESTOS REMOVALIST.

DO NOT WET ANY AREA THAT MAY CONTAIN ELECTRICAL WIRING OR EQUIPMENT THAT MAY BE CONNECTED TO ELECTRICITY SUCH AS HOUSEHOLD GOODS (FRIDGES), TOOLS ETC.

#### DON'T KNOW HOW TO IDENTIFY ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS?

Visit asbestosawareness.com.au to view our online video, Asbestos In Your Home – The Ultimate Renovators Guide and search the Asbestos Products Database for examples of what to look for!

## **ASBESTOS PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**SHOULD BE WORN AT ALL TIMES WHEN WORKING WITH ASBESTOS MATERIALS!

The purpose of wearing PPE when working with asbestos is to create a barrier between you and the fibres. There should be no tears or breaks in any PPE products. Remember, if products (such as coveralls) are damaged or torn, fibres can get in so any damaged or perished PPE must NOT be used and must be disposed of.

- 1. IF YOU'RE NOT SURE IF A PRODUCT CONTAINS ASBESTOS, TREAT IT AS IF IT IS ASBESTOS AND TAKE ALL THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS!
- **2. SUITABLE PPE** is made from materials that protect you and your clothes from fibres including coveralls, gloves, safety footwear, shoe covers, gloves and protective eyewear.
- **3. DISPOSABLE PPE** can be used ONLY ONCE then must be disposed of safely just like any asbestos waste (see page 7).
- **4. TRADIES SHOULD** always keep a PPE kit on hand as part of their regular tool kit in case they come across asbestos materials on the job.

## **ASBESTOS 'PPE KIT'**PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- **WEAR** all items listed in the PPE Kit whenever working with asbestos.
- **ALL** items in a disposable PPE Kit must be disposed of as ASBESTOS WASTE after use.

#### Wear the PPE in the following order:

- 1. Disposable coveralls 4. Gloves 2. Footwear 5. Mask
- 3. Shoe covers 6. Protective eyewear

NOTE: ONLY WEAR old clothes under the coveralls. These should be disposed of with the coveralls after use.

#### **DISPOSABLE COVERALLS**

- Should be rated Type 5, Category 3.
- Be labelled for asbestos use.
- Be one size too big to prevent breaking or tearing when worn.
- Include a hood and elasticised cuffs.
- Cuffs should be pulled over the edge of gloves.
- If the cuffs of coverall arms are loose, seal them with tape to prevent fibres getting in.
- After the shoe covers are fitted, ensure the coverall legs then go over the top of shoe covers.
- After the mask and eyewear are fitted, ensure the hood goes over the mask straps and arms of eyewear, and covers all hair.

#### **FOOTWEAR & SHOE COVERS TO BE WORN OVER SHOES**

- **NEVER** wear boots or shoes with laces as they can't be decontaminated.
- **GUMBOOTS** are the best option as they are easily wiped clean and have no laces. Once cleaned appropriately they can be re-used for non-asbestos work.
- SHOE COVERS are worn OVER shoes and should cover all of the boot/shoe and be secured above the ankle.
- WHEN shoe covers are secured, pull the cuffs of the coverall legs down to cover the top of shoe covers.

#### **GLOVES**

- Use ONLY disposable Latex, Nitrile or neoprene gloves.
- Tuck under the cuffs of coveralls and tape the cuffs if loose.

#### MASK (RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT)

- Your mask should be worn at all times when working with asbestos containing materials.
- Minimum P2 filter, half face disposable particulate respirator.
- Half face non-disposable particulate respirator with cartridge is preferred but it must be decontaminated after each use.
- The wearer must be clean shaven in the area of the seal.
- All respirators are different shapes and sizes so it's important that the size is correct to properly fit to the wearer's face.
- Ensure your mask fits perfectly by conducting a respirator fit check.
  - Close off inlet to filter with hands
  - Inhale gently
  - Hold for 10 seconds
  - Ensue the face piece remains slightly collapsed

#### **PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR**

- **ALWAYS** wear protective eyewear when working with materials that might produce dust.
- After fitting your mask, fit your eyewear and place the hood over the top of the mask straps and eyewear arms.









#### **EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST**

- ✓ **ENSURE** your PPE kit includes ALL items listed here.
- PLASTIC 200um in rolls for covering areas in the work space.
- ✓ **DUCT TAPE** for sealing bags and securely joining pieces of plastic from rolls.
- ✓ WET WIPES (preferred) or disposable cloths for decontaminating the area after the job is complete.
- ✓ **BUCKET** for wetting disposable cloths when decontaminating the area.
- ✓ WATER sprayer (hose or bottle) for wetting down asbestos materials.
- ✓ **SEALANT** (PVA glue) to mix 1 part per 5 parts with water to seal edges.
- ✓ NON-ELECTRICAL tools for removal of fixings and materials if required.
- ✓ **PLASTIC BAGS** to contain and seal in asbestos materials. These should be made of 200um (0.2mm) virgin plastic and be labelled/marked as 'ASBESTOS WASTE'. If bags are unavailable, use 200um virgin plastic in rolls and label/mark as 'ASBESTOS WASTE'.



## **WORKING SAFELY WITH ASBESTOS**

- 1. INFORM homeowners in advance before commencing work
- **2. HOMEOWNERS** should remove washing from clotheslines. Remove pets and pet bowls from work area.
- **3. ENSURE** no one else is near the area you are working in unless they're wearing PPE.
- **4. CLOSE** all doors and windows to prevent drafts.
- **5. TURN OFF** all heating or cooling systems including fans and air-conditioning.
- **6. COVER** any surface in the work area that could become contaminated with fibres, dust and debris with plastic sheeting (200um drop sheets) and secure with duct tape.
- 7. **BEFORE STARTING WORK** wear all your PPE gear!
- **8. KEEP** asbestos materials wet using a light mist spray.
- **9. AVOID** breaking asbestos materials during work.
- **10. DO NOT** leave the work area once work has commenced. If you must leave while work is underway, you must decontaminate yourself as per the following procedures and recommence work using new PPE.

### STEPS FOR DECONTAMINATION

## HOW TO SAFELY DOUBLE BAG AND SEAL ASBESTOS WASTE AND PPE

- Carefully place asbestos materials in the 200um plastic bags or wrap using rolls of 200um plastic (drop sheets), seal using duct tape and label 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'.
- **2.** Plastic bags containing asbestos should NOT be more than half full to prevent breaking and must be double bagged.
- **3.** Tightly twist the bag opening and fold over to form a 'goose neck'.
- **4.** Secure with heavy duty duct tape or similar to seal.
- 5. Place each sealed bag inside a second plastic bag labelled 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE' and seal as you did the first bag with duct tape. This is called 'double bagging'.
- **6.** If using rolls of 200um plastic, carefully wrap items and seal edges of plastic with duct tape. Repeat the process to double wrap materials.
- **7.** Whether using bags or rolls of 200um plastic, all materials must be double wrapped or double bagged, sealed with duct tape and labelled '**DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE**'.

### **IMPORTANT**

ALL MATERIALS MUST BE 'DOUBLE BAGGED' USING 200UM PLASTIC BAGS OR 'DOUBLE WRAPPED' USING 200UM PLASTIC ROLLS, SEALED WITH DUCT TAPE AND LABELLED 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE' BEFORE BEING REMOVED FROM THE WORK AREA FOR APPROPRIATE DISPOSAL.

YOU MUST CONTINUE TO WEAR YOUR PPE THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS.

**REMOVE YOUR MASK LAST!** 

#### **DECONTAMINATING THE WORK AREA**

- **1.** Carefully wrap plastic drop sheets and double bag or wrap.
- **2.** Use wet wipes or wet disposable cloths to wipe away any dust from surfaces or tools.
  - Wet wipes/cloths should be used ONCE ONLY.
  - Wet wipes/cloths should be used flat (not wadded).
  - If using cloths, use the bucket of water to wet cloths before use.
  - Never rinse cloths in water and reuse.
  - After use, wet wipes or cloths must be double bagged or double wrapped and seal with duct tape.
- 3. Carefully wet wipe surfaces and all hand tools or equipment including the bucket. If tools aren't able to be decontaminated they should be discarded as 'ASBESTOS WASTE' or double bagged for later use but ONLY when wearing PPE.
- **4.** Wet wipe the outside of bags before removing bags from the work area.

#### PERSONAL DECONTAMINATION

- **1.** Remove any visible asbestos dust from protective clothing by wet wiping with clean, wet wipes/cloths and place a 200um plastic bag.
- **2.** Carefully remove shoe covers, gloves and coveralls and place in a 200um plastic bag.
- **3.** Use wet wipes/cloths to wipe down footwear then place cloths in a plastic bag.
- **4.** Wipe down the outside of all bags with wet wipes/cloths and place in a plastic bag.
- **5.** Remove mask last and place in a 200um plastic bag and seal using the double bag method.
- **6.** Remove old clothing and double bag as you did the other disposable items.
- **7.** Seal all plastic bags using duct tape and the double bag method.
- **8.** Wash hands, nails, face and head thoroughly with soapy water.
- **9.** Shower and wash hair to complete personal decontamination.

### IMPORTANT

WHEN DECONTAMINATING YOURSELF, ALL ITEMS MUST BE DOUBLE BAGGED, SEALED WITH DUCT TAPE AND DISPOSED OF AS ASBESTOS WASTE AS PER THE ABOVE.

#### SAFELY DISPOSE OF ASBESTOS WASTE - Whatever you do, DON'T dump it!

- It is IMPORTANT that ALL PPE and materials used when removing or repairing asbestos are disposed of as ASBESTOS WASTE.
- Not all waste centres accept asbestos waste. Check with Council for your nearest authorised asbestos waste disposal centre.

### ALWAYS MANAGE ASBESTOS SAFELY!





## ThinkSmart.ThinkSafe.Think asbestosawareness.com.au

## it's not worth the risk!

- **1. NEVER** use tools, equipment or any other implement on asbestos materials that may cause the release of uncontrolled airborne asbestos into the atmosphere including:
  - **a.** Power tools such as drills, angle grinders, circular saws and sanders.
  - **b.** Brooms or other abrasive implements.
- **2. NEVER** use household/domestic vacuum cleaners when working with asbestos-containing materials or in the decontamination process.
- **3. ALWAYS** (where possible) use manually operated (non-powered) hand tools in combination with wet methods for dust control including:
  - a. Dust control hoods in combination with wet methods.
  - **b.** Water spraying with PVA solution of asbestos material during work.
  - **c.** Use gels and pastes to seal asbestos.
  - d. Shadow vacuum with a Class H approved asbestos vacuum. DO NOT USE household/domestic vacuum cleaners.
- **4. ALWAYS** ensure the use of tools and equipment on asbestos materials that may generate airborne asbestos is controlled by being:
  - a. Enclosed.
  - **b.** Designed to capture or suppress airborne asbestos.
  - **c.** Used in a way that airborne asbestos is not generated.
  - **d.** Any or all of the combinations above.

#### HAVE YOU BEEN EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS FIBRES?

The Australian Federal Government has created a register to record the details of members of the community who think they may have been exposed to asbestos. If you think you may have been exposed to asbestos fibres either during the course of your employment, at home or in the community, please register your details online.

www.asbestossafety.gov.au

For more information about asbestos and how to manage it safely visit asbestosawareness.com.au



asbestos education committee