



National Asbestos Awareness Month Toolbox Talk

Project Name: _____

Date: _____

Company Name: _____

Presenter: _____

Subject: National Asbestos Awareness Month

Duration: _____

What is the aim of this Toolbox Talk?

To increase awareness of the dangers of asbestos on worksites and remind workers about asbestos management procedures during National Asbestos Awareness Month (November).

The 2022 National Asbestos Awareness Month theme is: *'Respect Asbestos – It's not worth the risk!'*

Why is asbestos hazardous to workers?

- ⊙ Tradies and workers can expect to encounter asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in their daily work.
- ⊙ If workers don't know what to look for or how to manage asbestos safely, if ACMs are damaged or disturbed during work or demolition, asbestos fibres can be released into the air and be inhaled.
- ⊙ If fibres are inhaled, this could lead to asbestos-related diseases.
- ⊙ Australia has one of the highest incidences of asbestos-related diseases in the world.
- ⊙ An estimated 4,000 Australians die of asbestos-related diseases every year.
- ⊙ Deaths are predicted to rise as a direct result of exposure to asbestos fibres during home renovations, maintenance and demolition and in situations where people don't know if they risk disturbing ACMs.

What is the likelihood of workers coming in contact with asbestos in the workplace?

- ⊙ Asbestos was used in the manufacture of more than 3000 types of building and decorator products!
- ⊙ Thousands of various types of ACMs remain hidden in 1-in-3 Australian homes including brick, weatherboard, Fibro, clad homes and apartments built or renovated before 1990.
- ⊙ ACMs can be in other buildings such as garages and farm structures
- ⊙ ACMs are found in commercial and non-residential properties constructed before 2004.

What steps must you take if you come across materials you suspect are asbestos?

Treat every suspected ACM as if it is asbestos and take all the required precautions including:

- ⊙ **DO NOT DISTURB** or handle it.
- ⊙ **LEAVE IT** where you find it.
- ⊙ **REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY** to the worksite Site Manager / Supervisor or the Person With Management or Control of a Workplace (PWMCW).
- ⊙ **IF YOU FIND DUMPED ASBESTOS**, report it immediately to your council and/or your local EPA.

Are the laws about asbestos management and removal enforced?

YES! Legislation and guidance materials aimed at minimising exposure to asbestos fibres include:

- ⊙ The Work Health & Safety Act & The Work Health and Safety Regulations
- ⊙ Asbestos Codes of Practice (can vary in each state and territory so check with the regulator)

What must workers NEVER do with asbestos?

Don't cut it! Don't drill it! Don't sand it! Don't saw it! Don't scrape it! Don't scrub it! Don't dismantle it! Don't tip it! Don't waterblast it! And whatever you do, don't dump it!"

When it comes to asbestos, the rule is; If you think a material may contain asbestos, assume it is asbestos and take appropriate precautions!

For Fact Sheets, information & ACM images visit asbestosawareness.com.au – it's not worth the risk!

