



Asbestos Awareness Toolbox Talk – Residential Properties

Project Name: _____

Date: _____

Company Name: _____

Presenter: _____

Subject: Asbestos in residential properties

Duration: _____

What is the aim of this Toolbox Talk?

Increase awareness of the dangers of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in residential properties and to remind workers to manage asbestos safely to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres.

How common is asbestos in Australian homes?

- 1-in-3 homes contain asbestos including brick, weatherboard, Fibro, clad homes and apartments.
- If a home was built or renovated prior to 1990, it most likely contains asbestos in some form or another.
- Asbestos was used in the manufacture of more than 3000 types of building and decorator products!
- Prior to 1990, asbestos was widely used in a range of building and decorator materials.

What other types of residential property structures might contain asbestos?

- Asbestos was commonly used to build outdoor toilets, garages, carports, sheds and even dog kennels.
- It was also used to build fences and may have been used as formwork for footings.
- Asbestos was sometimes mixed with cement and could be wherever cement was used in construction.
- In regional and rural areas, it was common to use Fibro to build sheds for stock and storage.

What are the most common ACMs used in the construction of residential properties?

Flat and corrugated AC sheeting (Fibro) was commonly used in the construction of homes.

- Fibro (flat and corrugated) - internal walls and ceilings
- Fibro (flat and corrugated) - external walls and cladding, eaves, infill panels in windows and doors
- Fibro (flat and corrugated) - garages, outside toilets, carports, backyard sheds and dog kennels
- Corrugated AC sheeting was also used for roofing including "Super Six" and to construct fences

AC sheeting was not the only ACM used in building homes. ACMs were commonly used:

- In wet areas including kitchens, bathrooms and laundries
- As insulation in heating - wood heaters, stoves, sheeting under hearths, flue pipes, textile oven seals
- Roofing (corrugated) and roofing shingles
- Fencing (flat and corrugated)
- Flat sheeting under floor tiles
- Bathroom and laundry walls and kitchen splash backs
- Electrical switchboards
- Backing to vinyl floor tiles and sheet vinyl floor coverings
- Carpet underlay
- Backing behind ceramic wall tiles
- Water drainage, downpipes and guttering
- In some homes in NSW and ACT, loose-fill asbestos was used in ceiling space as insulation.
- Garden beds - It was common practice for workers to bury broken pieces of ACMs on building sites.

What should workers do before commencing any work, renovations, refurbishments or demolition?

- Workers MUST** determine if asbestos is present to ensure it is managed safely in line with regulations.
- An Occupational Hygienist or Licenced Asbestos Assessor can determine if asbestos is present.
- IMPORTANT:** Only use Licenced Asbestos Removalists to remove and dispose of ACMs.

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

