

Asbestos Fact Sheet

Asbestos is a form of magnesium silicate which can be found in older fibre cement products, such as fence or roofing panels. The asbestos contained in these products is non-friable (it doesn't break up easily), which can prevent the release of individual fibres, unless the sheets are damaged or degraded.

Asbestos was once used as an insulation material, mainly lagging for pipe work. In this form, it was more likely to be friable (crumbly and able to release fibres).



Materials containing asbestos are common in buildings built before 1990 and could include:

- Asbestos cement fencing
- Asbestos cement roofs and eaves
- Backing panels in meter boxes
- External feature cladding materials
- Internal and external asbestos cement wall sheeting
- Textured paints – especially in wet areas
- Paper backing material on sheet linoleum
- Vinyl floor tiles
- Thermal insulation boards around fire places
- Gaskets and rope door seals in wood stoves

How to dispose of asbestos

Friable asbestos should only be removed by a licensed contractor, businesses contracted to remove greater than 10 square metres of asbestos need to hold an Asbestos Removal License, please contact the Department of Mines, Industry Regulations and Safety.

Asbestos must be wrapped and sealed in heavy duty 'builders' plastic to ensure safe transportation to the Operations Centre. Once wrapped, the asbestos should be placed on a pallet or similar so a forklift can safely lift the material from your vehicle. Alternatively, each sheet can be wrapped individually for easy manual handling.

Safety Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- When handling asbestos:
- Wet everything down to reduce the number of airborne fibres;
- Use tools with dust suppression or extraction capabilities;
- Use vacuum equipment designed to extract asbestos fibres or sweep up any dust residues after thoroughly wetting down; and
- Wear protective equipment including a respirator (P1 or P2 type), disposable coveralls, safety glasses and disposable gloves.

Don'ts

- When handling asbestos:
- Use high pressure water hoses or compressed air to clean asbestos sheets; and
- Break or damage asbestos materials.