



Renovating?
Think Smart. Think Safe. Think
asbestosawareness.com.au
it's not worth the risk!



14 NOVEMBER 2011

NSW Government Agencies at State and Local Level Join Leading Asbestos Diseases Researcher Urging Homeowners, Handymen and Renovators to Learn the Dangers of Working with Asbestos!

On Monday 21 November, the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI) will launch a week-long campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of working with asbestos when renovating or maintaining homes.

Working in partnership with the Asbestos Education Committee (AEC), the ADRI will kick-off Asbestos Awareness week with the launch of the campaign, '**Think Smart, Think Safe, Think asbestosawareness.com.au it's not worth the risk**'.

With as many as one in three Australian homes containing asbestos, during Asbestos Awareness Week (21 – 27 November), and particularly in the lead up to Christmas when people are undertaking home maintenance and renovations in preparation for the holiday season, the campaign aims to educate handymen, women, homeowners and their children about the risks of being exposed to asbestos fibres.

The campaign which is supported by the Local Government Association of NSW and Shires Association of NSW, President, Local Government Association of NSW, Cr Keith Rhoades AFSM said, "The Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA) welcomes Asbestos Awareness Week and the release of on-line resources. It's very important that we continue to educate homeowners and renovators about the dangers of working with asbestos whilst renovating and completing home maintenance."

"The community should be alert but not alarmed regarding potential asbestos exposure situations. It's vital that residents, renovators and professionals have easy access to clear advice about what they should and shouldn't do to avoid exposure to asbestos."

"Asbestos is prevalent in older buildings throughout NSW, both city and country, but with sensible and straightforward advice, the risks of harm can be minimised and avoided altogether," said Cr Rhoades.

In launching the campaign, Professor van Zandwijk, an international leader in asbestos disease research and Director of the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute appealed to homeowners, handymen and renovators to learn about the dangers of working with asbestos so they can protect themselves and their families from asbestos dust.

"We're urging homeowners and renovators, particularly young couples who often enjoy the challenge of doing the work themselves and who are working within tight budgets, to ask themselves this very important question; '**Could my home contain asbestos and could I be putting my health and the health of my family at risk by disturbing asbestos?**'

Many Australians may unknowingly be putting their health and the health of their children, and neighbours at risk because they don't really understand the dangers of working with asbestos or know where it might be found in and around their home.

If a home was built or renovated in the years leading up to 1985, it most likely contains asbestos and while if left undisturbed it does not pose a health risk, during renovations or the demolition of these homes, asbestos fibres can be released into the air and be inhaled leading to asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

Professor Nico van Zandwijk said, "The real issue with asbestos related diseases is that the patients being diagnosed today, were exposed to asbestos 20-40 years ago and so by educating families about the risks and preventative measures they can take today, we aim to reduce the number of Australians diagnosed with asbestos related disease in the future.

"During Asbestos Awareness Week, our message to all Australians who might be thinking of renovating, removing asbestos or working with asbestos around the home is to think smart, think safe, think asbestosawareness.com.au or you may put yourself and your loved ones at risk of developing asbestos related diseases later in life," he said.

Peter Dunphy, Director Operations Group WorkCover NSW and member of the Asbestos Education Committee said, thanks to the efforts of employer and worker groups and regulatory authorities, awareness of how to remove asbestos safely is increasing amongst workers.

"We want people to better understand the risks associated with asbestos and what is needed to be done to ensure its safe removal and disposal," Mr Dunphy said.

Licensed asbestos removalists have specialist knowledge about different types and forms of asbestos including how to safely handle and remove asbestos material. Visit www.workcover.nsw.gov.au to find out about regulations and obligations regarding asbestos removal.

Cr Ray Donald, President of the Shires Association of NSW said, "The LGSA see Asbestos Awareness Week and the associated on-line resources as a big step in the right direction for raising awareness of this very important issue. Our communities need access to information, and appropriate disposal options for asbestos-containing materials which are not cost-prohibitive."

"Experience has shown that if disposal of asbestos is too difficult or if it becomes too expensive for the community to do the right thing, then there is temptation to resort to inappropriate behaviour such as illegal dumping or disguising of asbestos in mixed waste loads."

"This is a problem we want to see dramatically reduced, and Asbestos Awareness Week not only highlights the importance of correct disposal, but also provides practical advice for our communities, homeowners and renovators on how to manage and dispose of asbestos correctly."

Professor van Zandwijk said, "In the lead-up to and during this holiday season, we're urging Australians to visit asbestosawareness.com.au to learn where asbestos might be found in the home and how to manage it safely. Importantly, if you find asbestos in your home; Don't cut it! Don't drill it! Don't drop 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! Don't demolish it! And whatever you do... Don't dump it!" Visit www.asbestosawareness.com.au for information on managing asbestos in and around the home.

The Asbestos Diseases Research Institute is Australia's leading research institution into asbestos-related diseases. It is a charitable, not-for-profit foundation dedicated to paving a better future for all those Australians exposed to asbestos fibres while being instrumental in determining effective preventative measures. The ADRI has also coordinated experts from around Australia to draft uniform national guidelines for the treatment of mesothelioma.

During Asbestos Awareness Week, the ADRI is appealing for donations to help support this vital research into asbestos related diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. To support the ADRI in its medical research endeavours please call 02 9767 9800 (during business hours) or visit www.adri.org.au. Donations of \$2.00 or more will be gratefully received and are fully tax deductible.

-ENDS-

Please see detailed Journalist Notes from page 3 of this release or to arrange an interview with spokespersons and representatives of the ADRI, the Asbestos Education Committee or the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authority about the importance of asbestos awareness, please contact: **Clare Collins - Insight Communications**
P 02 9319 3844 - M 0414 821 957 E clare@insightcommunications.net.au

JOURNALIST NOTES

ASBESTOS... WHAT HANDYMEN, WOMEN & HOMEOWNERS NEED TO KNOW!!!

The Importance of Safely Managing Asbestos in and Around the Home

- 1 in 3 Australian homes contains building materials with asbestos
- The risk to families is when building materials containing asbestos are disturbed or damaged and this can release dangerous dust and fibres that can be inhaled
- People put themselves and their children at risk if they are not aware of the hazards of working with asbestos materials including fibro
- There are legal and safety requirements for the management of asbestos. Follow the regulations. It's not worth the risk.
- The cost of asbestos removal by a licenced professional is comparable in price to most licenced tradesmen including electricians, plumbers and tilers
- The cost of disposal at a lawful landfill site is usually included when using a licenced professional removalist
- Homeowners and renovators can visit www.workcover.nsw.gov.au for a brochure on asbestos management - Working With Asbestos Guide 2008

It is Important Everyone Knows About Asbestos Health Risks and Safety Requirements

While some people may ensure they follow the regulations and safety requirements to remove small amounts of asbestos themselves, we recommend retaining a licenced asbestos removal professional who is equipped to protect you and your family from the dangers asbestos dust.

- When working in and around the home or renovating, if in doubt, assume you are dealing with asbestos and take every precaution
- The safest way to manage the removal of asbestos is to hire a licenced asbestos removal contractor
- Where asbestos fibres are friable (loose and not bonded into building materials), only licenced friable asbestos removalists are allowed to remove it
- If you do need to work with any material that may contain asbestos, ensure you take all the necessary precautions to protect yourself and minimise the release of dust or small particles from the asbestos materials that may affect others including children
- The NSW Ministry of Health has fact sheets about asbestos and health risks. For more information visit: www.health.nsw.gov.au

Why Can Asbestos Dust or Fibres be Dangerous to Your Health?

If you don't observe safety precautions when removing or working with asbestos, you risk exposing yourself and your family to long-term health risks.

- There is no safe level of exposure to asbestos fibres!
- If asbestos is disturbed it can release dangerous fine particles of dust containing asbestos fibres
- Breathing in dust containing asbestos fibres can cause asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma
- Mesothelioma is a cancer which most often occurs in the lining of the lung. There is no cure
- The rates of malignant mesothelioma (an incurable cancer) are expected to rise from 2012 to 2020.

- The risk of contracting asbestos related diseases increases with the number of fibres inhaled and the length of time that you inhaled asbestos fibres (number of years exposed)
- The risk of lung cancer from inhaling asbestos fibres is greatly increased if you smoke
- Symptoms of asbestos dust related diseases do not usually appear until about 20 to 30 years after the first exposure to asbestos
- The average time between exposure and developing mesothelioma is about 45 years

What NOT to Do With Asbestos in Your Home

- Never use tools on asbestos materials as they will make asbestos fibres airborne including:
 - Power tools such as electric drills, angle grinders, circular saws and electric sanders
 - Never use high pressure water blasters or compressed air

When Is Asbestos in the Home NOT a Significant Health Risk?

- Studies have shown that asbestos products, if in sound condition and left undisturbed, are not a significant health risk
- If the asbestos fibres remain firmly bound in a solid cement sheet or structure, generally you do not need to remove the asbestos
- If your home contains bonded asbestos products that are in good condition, leave them alone but remember to check them occasionally for any signs of wear and tear

About to Renovate and Not Sure If there is Asbestos in Your Home?

- Asbestos fibres were used widely in building materials before the mid-1980s
- If your house was built or renovated before the mid-1980s, it is likely to contain asbestos cement building materials
- Products made from bonded asbestos cement included fibro sheeting (flat and corrugated), water, drainage and flue pipes, roofing shingles and guttering
- If you are not sure if asbestos is in your home or in need of replacement, you can have your home inspected for unsafe asbestos by a licenced removalist or occupational hygienist

Has Asbestos Exposure Been Linked to DIY Renovating?

In 2008, a study by Professor Anthony Johnson et al into 'The prevalence of self reported asbestos exposure during home renovation in NSW residents' showed:

- 60.5% of do it yourself (DIY) renovators reported being exposed to asbestos during home renovations
- 53% reported their partner and 40% reported their children were also exposed to asbestos during home DIY home renovations
- Non DIY renovators were less likely to be exposed or have their families exposed
- 58% of DIY renovators cut AC Fibro Sheeting – this was the most common activity resulting in asbestos exposure
- 37% of DIY renovators reported using a power tool to cut asbestos products

The study concluded that asbestos exposure was common during home renovations – particularly in DIY and found a significant number of people were planning further renovations in the next five years.

Important Asbestos Facts

- Most people can't tell whether building materials contain asbestos just by looking at them
- Unless you take the required safety precautions and follow regulations, Don't cut it! Don't drill it! Don't drop 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! Don't demolish it! And whatever you do... Don't dump it!
- If you do need to work with any material that may contain asbestos, always work so there is minimal dust or small particles released from the asbestos materials
- Only scientific testing of a sample of material by an accredited National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) asbestos testing laboratory can confirm the presence of asbestos. For information on testing and accredited laboratories in your area, visit www.nata.asn.au or call (03) 9274 8200
- Asbestos materials that are in good condition are unlikely to release asbestos fibres if left undisturbed
- If asbestos materials are in good condition, paint them and leave them alone
- The use of asbestos in products has been banned since 2003
- For important information about working with asbestos see WorkCover NSW's Guide to working with asbestos by visiting: workcover.nsw.gov.au

Understanding Asbestos

- Asbestos building materials is described as either "bonded" or "friable".
- **Friable asbestos** is any material containing asbestos and is in the form of a powder or can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry. Friable asbestos was not commonly used in the home; it was mainly used in industrial applications.
- **Bonded asbestos** is any material (other than friable asbestos) that contains asbestos. Bonded asbestos cannot be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry. Common uses for bonded asbestos in buildings include: flat (fibro), corrugated or compressed asbestos cement sheets; water, drainage and flue pipes; and floor tiles. WorkCover NSW has produced a fact sheet about Bonded Asbestos

Where Might Asbestos Be Found in Your Home?

Products made from bonded asbestos cement that may have been used in your home include:

- Fibro sheeting (flat and corrugated) which may have been used in internal walls and ceilings, external walls and cladding, infill panels in windows and doors, eaves, fencing, carports, backyard sheds and dog kennels, electrical switchboards, sheeting under floor tiles, bathroom walls, backing to floor tiles and sheet vinyl, carpet underlay, and the backing behind the ceramic wall tiles and textile seals to the oven
- Water drainage and flue pipes
- Roofing shingles and guttering

IMPORTANT: If fire, hail, or water blasting damages bonded asbestos, it may become friable asbestos material and must be managed and removed by a licenced Friable Asbestos Removalist.

What Are the Legal Requirements When Working with Asbestos?

The NSW Government has regulations in force to protect you, your family, the environment and the community when you are working with asbestos. Legal requirements relating to asbestos include:

- It is illegal to dispose of asbestos waste in domestic garbage bins
- It is illegal to re-use or recycle asbestos products
- It is illegal to dump asbestos products
- It is illegal to use power tools that make asbestos fibres airborne
- It is illegal to waterblast asbestos cement sheets (fibro)
- Only licenced asbestos removalists can remove asbestos of 10 square metres or more
- Only licenced Friable Asbestos Removalists are able to handle or remove any amount of friable asbestos
- Licensed removal work has to be notified to WorkCover 7 days prior to removal
- A worksite permit must be issued to remove friable asbestos
- All licenced contractors have to be able to give you a copy of their licence, you should ask to see their licence when hiring an asbestos removalist to ensure they have a current licence
- 10 square metres is equivalent to the size of a typical bedroom wall in an average home or about the size of a small bathroom or an outside toilet or shed
- All licenced contractors must be able to give you a copy of their current licence - ask to see their licence when hiring an asbestos removalist
- All asbestos removal is to be in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos NOHSC [2002(2005)]
- It is illegal to bury asbestos on your own property
- All asbestos must be legally disposed of at a lawful landfill site. Not every landfill site in NSW is authorised to accept asbestos. To find a site near you visit: www.environment.nsw.gov.au
- Your council may also have policies regarding the removal of asbestos so visit your council's website to find out what's required

Visit WorkCover for information and regulations regarding management, handling, training and licencing for asbestos removal '*Working with asbestos: Guide*': workcover.nsw.gov.au

Visit the Office of Environment and Heritage for a brochure '*Safely disposing of asbestos waste from your home*' which contains information for home renovators and builders on the safe handling, storage, transport and disposal of asbestos waste: environment.nsw.gov.au

Removal of Asbestos by Licenced Removalists

To ensure protection of you and your family we recommend using a licenced professional to remove asbestos from your home. To carry out this type of work in New South Wales contractors must:

- Be licenced from WorkCover NSW to remove any amount of friable asbestos
- Have a licence from WorkCover NSW to remove 10 square metres or more of bonded asbestos
- Obtain a site-specific permit from WorkCover NSW for removal of friable asbestos and notify for bonded asbestos

IMPORTANT: Be sure to confirm the contractor has the appropriate class of licence for the asbestos removal job and ask for a copy of their licence prior to engaging them. For more information, contact:

- WorkCover NSW on 13 10 50 or,
- The Asbestos and Demolition Unit Information line on (02) 8260 5885

When the licenced removalist has disposed of the asbestos, ask the company to provide you with copies of disposal receipts and retain them for your records

Is it Safe to Remove Asbestos Yourself?

If you must remove it yourself, you **MUST** take precautions! Removing asbestos can be a dangerous and complicated process. We recommend using licenced professional removalists who will also dispose of it in accordance with NSW Government regulations.

However, if you are thinking about removing even a small amount of asbestos yourself, at the very minimum you should meticulously follow ALL of the steps listed at asbestosawareness.com.au in order to protect your health and the health of those around you including children.

The important point is this: if you need to work with materials that may contain asbestos, you must work so there is a minimal release of fibres, dust or small particles from the asbestos materials.

It is recommended that if you are considering removing or working with asbestos yourself, you undertake a training course to ensure you have the training to do it safely. Courses are available at: TAFE NSW, Housing Industry Association (HIA), Local Government Training Institute, Comet Training, Masters Builders Association (MBA) and Asbestos Removal Contractors Association NSW (ARCA).

IMPORTANT: If the asbestos is in powder form or can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry, **it must be removed by an asbestos removal contractor** with a friable asbestos licence.

Disposing of Asbestos

- Asbestos waste can only be disposed of at specific landfills located in various regions of in NSW
- To arrange to dispose of asbestos, you must first contact your local council to locate your nearest licenced waste landfill site
- Ensure asbestos waste has been wetted, wrapped in 200um thick plastic, and sealed with tape before it is transported to a landfill site that may lawfully receive the waste
- It must be clearly labelled as "asbestos waste"
- It must be transported in a covered, leak-proof vehicle
- It is wise to keep copies of receipts from landfills where asbestos was taken as councils or the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) may require you to produce these receipts as proof of proper disposal

Important Safety Facts To Know When Working With Asbestos

- There are a number of safety precautions you will need to know including protective clothing, the correct mask or breathing apparatus
- To learn more information about working safely with asbestos and links to councils, WorkCover and EPA please visit asbestosawareness.com.au
- For a safety checklist, 'Fibro and Asbestos - First Steps Checklist' visit: www.more.nsw.gov.au

The Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI), located in the Bernie Banton Centre, Concord NSW was officially opened by the then Prime Minister, the Hon. Kevin Rudd in January 2009. With Australia having one of the highest incidences of asbestos cancers in the world, the ADRI was established by the Asbestos Diseases Research Foundation (a charitable not-for-profit organisation) as Australia's only purpose built research facility dedicated to preventing asbestos related diseases. The ADRI's primary objectives are to:

1. Conduct research into asbestos related diseases to provide a better future for all Australians diagnosed with asbestos related illness
2. Be instrumental in promoting effective preventative measures to avoid Australians being unnecessarily exposed to asbestos fibres

With the establishment of the ADRI as the first stand-alone research institute dedicated to tackling this silent and still increasing epidemic, Australia has taken a vital step forward in the international fight against asbestos related diseases.

Malignant Mesothelioma

Malignant mesothelioma (MM) almost uniquely caused by asbestos exposure was seldom diagnosed until the 1960's. According to Safe Work Australia, in 2007, 660 Australians were diagnosed with malignant mesothelioma and experts have estimated that there were at least another 1,350 Australians with lung cancer caused by asbestos. A tragic consequence of highly intensive use of asbestos and its products in Australia in the previous century, it is estimated that these figures will continue to rise in the coming decades.

MM is a disease that develops several years after the first exposure to asbestos fibres. However, the disease is currently also diagnosed in young adults incidentally exposed to asbestos fibres as children. The fact that approximately 1/3 of older Australian homes built or renovated before 1985 contain asbestos, reinforces the significance of Australians undertaking adequate preventive measures.

The prognosis of MM patients is poor and almost all will experience severely debilitating symptoms. MM is only partially responding to the current forms of oncologic therapy and currently there is no curative treatment for the disease. It is therefore critical that we make a substantial investment in medical research to find better means of understanding the specific biology of MM in order to try to achieve better clinical outcomes for people affected by the disease.

Why invest in research in Malignant Mesothelioma

When compared to other frequently diagnosed cancers such as breast cancer and melanoma, MM has been understudied. However, outcomes of research conducted into MM provide excellent opportunities for insights into cancer that can be widely applied. For example:

- a) *The carcinogen is known:* For most solid human malignancies, the actual carcinogen is not known (even for cigarette smoke where multiple carcinogens have been implicated). The single dominant carcinogen for the development of MM is asbestos. Therefore, its role can be followed in studies ranging from the laboratory to epidemiological studies.
- b) *At-risk cohorts can be identified and followed:* One of the keys to studying populations at risk of cancer is to be able to identify those at highest risk. Because individuals who have been exposed to high levels of asbestos are at (high) risk of developing MM (e.g., occupational exposure), these individuals can be followed prospectively over decades in screening/biomarker studies.
- c) *High quality animal models exist:* Animal models of MM pathogenesis and treatment can be studied and translated into novel therapies for MM patients.
- d) *Novel treatments are desperately needed:* The options for current standard treatment are limited and new agents can be investigated relatively easily.
- e) *Common responsibility:* MM as a man-made disease that not only asks for responsibility from employers and legislators, but also from Australian society *that as a whole, has permitted intensive asbestos use in the past.*

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it's not worth the risk!



ASBESTOS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Asbestos Awareness campaign is being overseen by WorkCover, the ACTU and James Hardie and supported by the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute. Funding for this campaign was provided by James Hardie Industries SE.

HEADS OF ASBESTOS COORDINATION AUTHORITIES

In November 2010 the NSW Ombudsman released a report called Responding to the asbestos problem: The need for significant reform in NSW.

In response to the Ombudsman's Report the Government supported the findings of the report and announced the establishment of a central coordination body – the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA).

The HACA aims to ensure that NSW Government agencies and local councils effectively coordinate the safe management of asbestos across all areas of workplace health, public health and environment protection.

The HACA has been tasked with developing a State-wide Asbestos Plan, a Model Asbestos Policy for all Local Councils and an extensive educational campaign to raise public awareness.

The HACA is chaired by WorkCover CEO Lisa Hunt and attended by Executive representatives from the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Ministry of Health, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services, Division of Local Government, Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, Ministry of Police and Emergency Services and the Workers Compensation Dust Diseases Board.

WORKCOVER NSW

WorkCover is responsible for the issuing and control of licenses that are issued to all asbestos removal and demolition contractors.

WorkCover works with the employers, workers and community of NSW to achieve safer and more productive workplaces, and effective recovery, return to work and security for injured workers.

WorkCover administers occupational health and safety, injury management, return to work and workers compensation laws, and manage the workers compensation system.

WorkCover's activities include: health and safety, injuries and claims, licensing for some types of plant operators, registration of some types of plant and factories, training and assessment, medical and healthcare, law and policy. Call WorkCover on 13 10 50 for more information on managing asbestos in your home

NSW MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The NSW Ministry of Health has no express statutory responsibilities for managing asbestos related risks and incidents in NSW. The Ministry provides an expert advisory service for the human health related impacts to other governmental agencies on public health issues or when there is potential for public exposure to asbestos. Advice may include technical information or support on potential public health risks to concerned residents and assisting other agencies with the preparation of public health information bulletins.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY (EPA)

EPA's role is to regulate the classification, storage, transport and disposal of waste in NSW, including asbestos waste. The waste regulatory framework includes the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and the Protection of the Environment (Waste) Regulation 2005. Clause 42 of the regulations sets out the special requirements relating to the transportation and disposal of asbestos waste.

EPA is the appropriate regulatory (ARA) for activities that require an environment protection licence or are carried out by public authorities such as local councils, RTA, Sydney Water etc. Local councils are the ARA for activities that are not regulated by the EPA, which typically include building demolition, construction sites, residential properties, commercial sites and small to medium sized industrial facilities.

EPA works closely with local councils to ensure they can fulfil their important ARA responsibilities by providing ongoing capacity building support and guidance. EPA has developed resources to assist local government to regulate asbestos waste incidents and prevent illegal dumping. For instance EPA has published a comprehensive resource called 'Crackdown on Illegal Dumping: A Handbook for Local Government', which covers asbestos waste issues.

EPA has also developed an educational brochure (in consultation with WorkCover NSW) titled 'Safely disposing of asbestos waste from your home' For information on illegal dumping and safely disposing of asbestos waste visit: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF NSW AND SHIRES ASSOCIATION OF NSW

The Local Government Association of NSW (LGA) and the Shires Association of NSW represent 152 general purpose councils as well as about 13 special purpose councils. Regions of NSW Aboriginal Land Council are also eligible to be members of the LGA. The Associations represent the views of these councils by:

- Presenting councils views to governments
- Promoting Local Government to the community
- Providing specialist advice and services
- Councils can choose to be members of either Association

Each Association has its own elected Executive headed by a President, which meets every two months and holds an annual conference where members are able to vote on issues affecting Local Government. The Annual Conference is the supreme policy making event for each Association.

The Associations also have a Joint Committee, which makes many of the management and policy decisions on behalf of the Associations. The committee meets each alternate month.

Four standing committees - Local Government Operations and Reform, Social Policy, Economic Policy and Natural and Built Environment meet bi-monthly to deal with specific issues.

ASBESTOS RELATED DISEASES INFORMATION

Imbedded asbestos fibres irritate lung tissue around them, causing a number of diseases:

Pleural Disease

Inflammation and irritation of outer lining of lung, the pleura. The pleura stiffens and thickens widely (diffuse thickening) or in patches (plaques), and can fill with fluid. This thickening can restrict breathing.

Asbestosis

This is scarring of the lungs: the airways become so inflamed and scarred that the uptake of oxygen from the lungs into the blood is diminished. The lungs become stiff and inelastic, making breathing progressively difficult. Symptoms include tightness in the chest, dry cough, and in the later stages, a bluish tinge to the skin caused by lack of oxygen. Asbestosis is usually seen in former asbestos miners, asbestos manufacturing workers and insulation workers, and usually takes a decade or more to develop.

Lung Cancer

Exposure to asbestos fibres greatly increases a person's risk of developing lung cancer, particularly if they are also a smoker.

Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is a cancer arising from the cells lining the thoracic and abdominal cavities. It typically grows quickly and spreads widely before symptoms appear, making an early diagnosis and effective treatment very difficult. The average survival time after diagnosis is only 6 -18 months. A very small exposure to asbestos can be enough to trigger the cancer, however only a small percentage of people exposed to asbestos develop mesothelioma. There may be a lag of 20 to 40 years after asbestos exposure before mesothelioma results.

HOW EXPENSIVE IS IT TO USE A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL TO REMOVE ASBESTOS

A licenced removalist will come to your home, remove the asbestos safely and dispose of it according to WorkCover, EPA and council regulations.

Compared to other household expenses and tradesmen, the cost of retaining a professional asbestos removalist is affordable. Prices quoted here are an average price only based on quotes received by licenced trades persons and registered organisations.

Service/Product	Item	Details	Cost (approximate includes GST)
Plumbing	Standard call out rate for a quote only	First 15 mins	\$88.00
		Every 15 minutes after	\$22.00
Pest Inspection	Building Inspection & Timber Pest Inspection for a 3 bedroom house	Building Inspection (approx)	\$375.00
		Timber Pest Inspection (approx)	\$350.00
Electrician	Electrician rates vary from state to state, but the average rate is around.	<i>Cost varies between \$30 to \$150 per hour</i>	\$65 per hour
		Installation costs for:	
		– New power point (approx)	\$200.00
		– Off-peak hot water meter (approx)	\$500
		– Complicated rewiring can run into	Thousands of dollars
Medical Insurance (average prices)	Hospital only no extras	Couples - per annum	\$1,800
	Family Cover – Hospital & extras	Family - per annum	\$3,120
Home Insurance	Building - 1970's weatherboard home located in the Newcastle region	Sum insured at \$400,000 Contents sum insured at \$25,000 per annum (approx)	\$970.00 (package price)
Asbestos Home Inspections	Home inspections by an authorised inspector may vary in cost.	A pre-purchase inspection	Average price is approx \$400
Scientific Testing of Asbestos	To have a sample of material tested by a NATA accredited lab	Complete laboratory analysis with a report.	\$40 - \$140
Legal Disposal of Asbestos Waste	Any asbestos waste must be booked as special waste, which can only be accepted at nominated sites requiring 7 days notice Waste needs to be booked in with one business day notice.	300 kilos	\$145.00
		Over a tonne	\$380.00
Asbestos Removalist by a Licenced Professional	The cost to remove fibro or bonded asbestos can vary. It includes safe removal and disposal at an authorised waste depot	The 1 st 10 square metres. Often discounts apply for the removal of metres thereafter. Additional costs may apply, depending on location.	\$35.00 (approx) per square metre. There may be with some additional costs.
NOTE: Prices quoted in this table are estimates only and may vary from region to region, service to service, product to product. Prices have been sourced from relevant industries and licenced trade professionals.			