

Asbestos Safety in the Home

It is common to find asbestos in bathrooms, laundries, kitchens, as well as behind tiles and under flooring, if the building is old.

Asbestos in the home

Asbestos were commonly used in construction industry in Australia, from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Most homes from those years would have some building elements that contain asbestos.

Undisturbed, undamaged and intact asbestos-containing materials are generally considered safe.

Asbestos based materials are considered potentially dangerous only when its original form is disturbed, this includes the commencement of build or renovation or such as: removing, cleaning, cutting, sanding, drilling, grinding or pulling up those building elements that contain asbestos.

These activities may cause the asbestos fibers to be released into the air, where they can be inhaled.

House Fires

Fires affecting properties with asbestos-containing materials can produce a range of asbestos debris, including unburnt and partly burnt pieces. The high heat generated by the fire can severely damage asbestos-containing building materials and may spread them some distance from the affected area.

Asbestos dust and fibres have the potential to present a health risk during and after a fire if disturbed and not properly managed.



Further information about asbestos and house fires can be found at [Safework NSW](#).

Where can asbestos be found?

Outside the home:

- roof sheeting and capping
- gutters, gables and eaves/soffits
- water pipes and flues
- cladding for walls, including imitation brick cladding
- fencing
- carports, garages, outhouses, garden sheds
- electrical meter boxes.

Inside the home:

- wall sheeting, particularly in wet areas such as the kitchen, bathroom, toilet and laundry
- ceiling sheeting
- plaster patching compounds and textured paint
- electrical switchboards

- vinyl floor tiles and felt backing for vinyl and linoleum flooring
- roof insulation
- lagging on hot water pipes
- insulation in domestic heaters and stoves.

The [Australian Government](#) provides more information about asbestos safety for householders and home renovators.

Removal of asbestos

It is legal to remove up to 10 square meters of asbestos yourself. Above 10 square meters, a licenced removalist is required.

Due to the risk associated with asbestos, it is strongly recommended to leave any asbestos related work to a licenced removalist.



Who can remove asbestos in NSW?

Choose the right professional to remove your asbestos and always check their licence.

There are two different licences for asbestos removal in NSW:

- Class A – licence to remove friable asbestos
- Class B – licence to remove non-friable asbestos

You can apply for an asbestos removal licence from [SafeWork NSW - Asbestos work licences](#)

Tips

You cannot tell if a material contains asbestos by simply looking at it, so treat doubtful material as if it does contain asbestos.

For further information

Council will investigate complaints related to asbestos on private land in relation to public health and illegal disposal on public land.

Further information regarding asbestos air pollution or dumping, please contact Council's Environmental Health Officer or Customer Service on:

Phone: 9330 6400

E-mail: mail@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au

Lodge a request: [Log it / fix it](#)