

DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS CONTAINING ASBESTOS POLICY



Adopted by Council at its meeting
held on 16 August 2011

Aims and Objectives

This Policy aims to:

- Identify Council's requirements when assessing and determining Development Applications (DAs) for demolition and renovation of buildings containing asbestos.
- Provide information on the requirements in respect to the removal and handling of products containing asbestos.

Standard for Development

This Policy shall be adhered to when assessing and determining DAs for demolition and renovation of buildings containing asbestos.

Definitions

Asbestos – Asbestos is the generic term for a number of fibrous silicate minerals. There are two major groups of asbestos:

- the *serpentine* group contains chrysotile, commonly known as white asbestos
- the *amphibole* group contains amosite (brown asbestos) and crocidolite (blue asbestos), as well as some other less common types, such as tremolite, actinolite and anthophyllite

Friable asbestos – Friable asbestos is any material that contains asbestos and is in the form of a powder, or can be crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry. These materials are not commonly found in domestic houses. They were primarily used in commercial and industrial settings for fire proofing, sound proofing and insulation. They can be found in some old domestic heaters, stoves, hot water systems and associated pipe lagging and in the backing of vinyl and linoleum floor coverings.

Bonded asbestos - Bonded materials containing asbestos are the most common in domestic houses. They are commonly referred to as 'fibro', 'asbestos cement' and 'AC sheeting'. They are mainly made up of a bonding compound (such as cement or resin binder) with up to 15% asbestos. Bonded materials containing asbestos are solid, quite rigid and the asbestos fibres are tightly bound in the material. It cannot be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry.

Health Impacts

Asbestos fibres are made up of many very fine fibres so that as asbestos is further processed or disturbed, the airborne fibres become progressively finer and more hazardous. The most dangerous fibres are the smallest ones which are invisible to the naked eye, but which penetrate the deepest part of the lungs.

Breathing in the fibres of asbestos can bring the risk of asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. However, asbestos related diseases have a long delay or lag period in the order of 20 – 40 years between first exposure and the onset of symptoms and/or detection of the disease.

Asbestosis is the scarring of lung tissue that can result from the inhalation over a period of years of substantial amounts of asbestos. This results in breathlessness which may lead to disability and in some cases early death.

Lung cancer is related to the amount of fibre that is breathed in and the risk of lung cancer is greatly increased in those who also smoke tobacco.

Mesothelioma is a cancer of the pleura (outer lung lining) or of the peritoneum (the lining of the abdominal cavity). The risk of mesothelioma is less with chrysotile (white asbestos) than with other types of asbestos. Both pleural and peritoneal mesothelioma can result from exposure to amosite (brown asbestos) and crocidolite (blue asbestos).

Checking for Asbestos

The only way to determine the presence or type of asbestos in materials is to have a sample of the material tested at a NATA laboratory approved for asbestos identification. Such an analysis will confirm the presence or absence of asbestos, and type of asbestos if present. In the absence of an analysis, all fibrous cement products must be treated as though containing asbestos.

Licensing Requirements for the Removal of Asbestos

For the removal of any amount of loose/friable asbestos material this must be done by a licensed person.

A licensed person is also required for work involving the removal, repair or disturbance of bonded asbestos materials exceeding 10 square metres.

Licensing for asbestos removalists is regulated and administered by WorkCover NSW.

There are two types of asbestos licences. These are known as:

AS1 licences: - the operator to carry out work with friable and bonded asbestos

AS2 licences:- the operator to carry out work with bonded asbestos only

Handling and Removal of Asbestos

WorkCover Health and Safety Guidelines must be followed by all persons working with fibro products and are available on <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au> Additional information is also available at

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/waste/asbestos/index.htm>

Disposal

All asbestos waste must be disposed of at a landfill site that can lawfully receive the waste. Contact the Office of Environment and Heritage on 131 555 or visit <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/waste/asbestos/index.htm> for locations of designated landfill sites.

Enforcement

WorkCover NSW is the regulatory authority for the enforcement of the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001 and deals with asbestos incidents involving work sites. Council is the regulatory authority under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and undertakes investigation for non-work site related asbestos pollution incidents. Any complaints received by Council regarding the inappropriate handling of asbestos will be investigated and referred to WorkCover inspectors where incidents fall under their jurisdiction.

If you have any enquiries about asbestos or concerns about a person or contractor handling asbestos in an unsafe manner you can report the matter to either Council or WorkCover.

Development Consent Conditions Relating to Buildings Containing Asbestos

Conditions of development consent shall only be placed on applications for the demolition and renovation of buildings known to contain asbestos, or strongly suspected of containing asbestos, having regard to the age of the structure, as follows:

Asbestos – Statement Required

No later than seven days prior to the demolition of any building or structure, a written statement must be provided to Council indicating whether the building or structure contains asbestos or material containing asbestos and, if so, the following must also be provided:

- a) A hazardous substances audit report prepared by a competent and appropriately qualified person in compliance with AS2601-1991; and
- b) A hazardous substances management plan prepared by a competent and appropriately qualified person in compliance with AS2601-1991

Asbestos – Licensed Contractors

Demolition works involving the removal and disposal of asbestos cement must only be undertaken by contractors who hold a current WorkCover Demolition Licence or a current WorkCover Class 2 (Restricted) Asbestos Licence.

Asbestos – Notification of Neighbours

Fourteen days prior to the commencement of any demolition works involving asbestos, all immediate neighbours should be notified in writing of the intention to carry out asbestos demolition works. Copies of these written notifications should be retained and provided to Council.

Asbestos – Tip Receipts

Documentary evidence in the form of tip receipts from an approved Waste Management Facility shall be obtained demonstrating the appropriate disposal of the asbestos waste. Tip receipts shall be provided to Council prior to any further building works being undertaken on the site.

Asbestos – Clearance Certificate

Following the removal of all friable asbestos and prior to further works being carried out on the site, a clearance certificate from an independent competent person in accordance with the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos is to be obtained and submitted to Council.

Asbestos – Less than 10m2 of Bonded Asbestos Sheeting

Demolition works involving the removal of less than 10m2 of bonded asbestos sheeting may be carried out by a licensed builder who has completed an appropriate bonded asbestos removal course.

Acknowledgments

Shellharbour City Council – *Asbestos Policy*

Shoalhaven City Council – *Demolition and Renovation of Buildings Containing Asbestos Policy*

NSW WorkCover Authority. 2008 – *Working with Asbestos Guide 2008*