

Guidelines for Disposal of Material Containing Asbestos

Removal of Asbestos Cement Building Products

- Left undisturbed in buildings, asbestos cement (AC) building products do not present a threat to health; this has been shown by studies carried out in Western Australia and elsewhere. There is no need to remove or to coat asbestos cement materials because of health concerns.
- However, if AC building products must be removed, this must be done safely and without risk to workers or the public. If inhaled by humans, asbestos fibres can cause asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma, a disease which is invariably fatal, therefore safe work procedures must be complied with.

Hazards

- A significant hazard will be created if power tools are used for cutting, drilling, sanding, grinding or sawing AC products.
- Power tools must NOT be used on AC products, except for the removal of screws. Safe work procedures must be implemented and followed at all stages of removal and disposal of AC products.
- Although the risk to humans from installed and undisturbed AC products is negligible, surface weathering of AC products can lead to the release of asbestos fibres during removal. This is why safe work procedures must be followed.
- Treating weathered AC roofing with paints and coatings is dealt with in another pamphlet, "How Safe Is Asbestos Cement?" available from either WorkSafe Western Australia or the Health Department.

Safe Work Procedures That Must be Followed

1. When AC building products are being removed, signs and barriers must be erected to warn of the danger and to prevent unauthorised people entering.
 2. All people in the AC removal area must wear disposable coveralls and either a class P1 or P2 disposable mask.
 3. AC sheets must be sprayed with a PVA (poly vinyl acetate) solution or kept wet during removal. Care must be taken on roofs because AC sheets are brittle and slippery when wet.
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4. Non-powered hand tools or portable power tools incorporating dust suppression or dust extraction attachments designed to collect asbestos fibres must be used.
5. AC products must be removed with minimal breakage, and lowered to the ground, not dropped.
6. Removed sheets are to be stacked on polythene sheeting, then wrapped and sealed into bundles for disposal, or placed directly into disposable bins that have been lined with polythene sheeting, and sealed for disposal.
7. Sheets must not be left lying about the site where they may be further broken or crushed by machinery or site traffic.
8. When removed sheets are being stacked, care must be taken not to skid one sheet over another, as this will result in the release of fibres.
9. Roof gutters must be cleaned or sealed prior to their removal.
10. Any AC residue remaining in the roof space or within the removal area is to be cleaned up, using an approved vacuum cleaner if necessary.

Asbestos for Disposal to be Separated, Wrapped and Labelled

All waste containing asbestos material must be:

1. Separated from other material for disposal where that is reasonably practicable.
2. Kept wet wrapped in polythene or otherwise sealed in a manner that prevents asbestos fibres entering the atmosphere during transportation, and removed from the site as soon as practicable.
3. Labelled or marked with the words "CAUTION ASBESTOS" in letters no less than fifty (50 millimetres high).
4. Used disposable coveralls and masks are to be placed in bags for removal with other asbestos waste.

Disposal of Material Containing Asbestos

All asbestos material must be disposed at a Disposal Site licensed to accept asbestos waste under Part V of *the Environmental Protection Act 1986*. The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Environment may also approve other facilities to accept asbestos material. Contact the Department of Environment for details of Disposal Sites licensed to accept asbestos material.

Duty to Notify Others of Presence of Asbestos

A person who takes material containing asbestos to a Disposal Site (or facility approved by the Department of Environment) MUST inform the person who operates or controls that facility that the material is, or contains asbestos.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the Regulations can result in a fine of up to \$5000. Penalties can be considerably greater if an offence is committed under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (such as pollution caused from the illegal disposal of controlled waste).

Permits

Under the Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulation 2004, permits are NOT required for the off-site removal, transportation or disposal of material containing asbestos.

Additional Contacts

For Information On:	Contact:
Safe Handling of Asbestos Products and Asbestos in the Home	An Environmental Health Officer or Department of Health (WA) (08) 9388 4999
Asbestos in the Workplace	Worksafe (08) 9327 8777
Asbestos-caused Diseases	Asbestos Disease Society of Australia (08) 9344 4077
Asbestos Disposal Sites,	Department of Environment and Conservation
Specific Conditions of Disposal	Asbestos Disposal Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Cockburn, Henderson - 9411 3444• City of Armadale, Forrestdale - 9399 3935• Waste Stream, Kwinana - 9439 1300• West Australian Landfill Service, South Cardup - 9350 7134• Eclipse Resources, Postans - 9380 3333

Further information can be obtained from City of Melville Environmental Health Services on 1300 635 845.

