



Asbestos

In Queensland there are a number of laws relating to building and renovating and there are specific laws designed to protect the health of the general community, particularly in relation to asbestos.

There are very strict regulations and safety standards which apply to the removal, handling and disposal of asbestos material and persons engaged in this type of work are required to be licensed (A Class licence or B Class licence) if handling or removing more than 10m² of asbestos contaminated material. Home renovators may undertake asbestos related work if the area is less than 10m² (refer www.health.qld.gov.au), however strict requirements apply in relation to disposal – asbestos contaminated material *cannot* be placed in a Council home wheelie bin or put out for Council kerbside cleanup.

There are two types of asbestos - bonded and friable (loose). Bonded asbestos consists of a bonding compound (cement) combined with asbestos to form a solid material with the asbestos fibres bound tightly into the material. This is also known as 'fibro' or 'AC sheeting' but there are a number of other products under a variety of names which also contain asbestos.

Friable (or loose) asbestos is not bound within a product and is more susceptible to becoming airborne. It is not commonly found in domestic houses, but may be found in old domestic heaters, sprayed asbestos ceilings, stoves, hot water systems, thermal lagging and fire protective clothing. It should be noted that, after time, even bonded asbestos products may become friable.

Some of the common places where asbestos may be found in and around your home include:

- Corrugated asbestos roofing
- Wall sheeting
- Ceiling sheeting
- Backyard sheds, outbuildings (roof, ceilings and walls)
- Electrical meter board
- Wet areas (bathrooms, toilets) including wall and ceiling lining and under floor tiles
- Lining above windows and doors
- Eaves
- Hot water piping/lagging
- Sheeting under floor tiles
- Insulation in heaters and stoves
- Fire rated doors
- Sheeting used as garden edging or footing boxing
- Carpet underlay.

In general domestic circumstances, undisturbed or unbroken asbestos is not dangerous.

However, if you are planning an extension, renovation or other building project around your home, office or warehouse – even if it is just sanding and painting - we recommend you contact a licensed asbestos removal contractor or an asbestos consultant for advice and assistance. Also see the [Asbestos Removal Checklist](#) below.

Helpful information may also be found at:

Queensland Health www.health.qld.gov.au.

Brisbane City Council www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:STANDARD:2058748741:pc=PC_1841

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland www.whs.qld.gov.au



Asbestos Removal Checklist

- 1. Identification** – before you start any extension, renovation or building project around your home, office or warehouse, and if the structure was built prior to 1990, contact a professional who can identify if asbestos is present.
- 2. Licences** – make sure you engage only an appropriately licensed asbestos removal contractor.
Ask to see either:
 - **Certificate to perform prescribed activity** with the Type of Work specified as *Asbestos Removalist* (also known as an **A class licence**), or
 - **B class licence**.Please note a B class licenceholder is only permitted to work with bonded asbestos products. An A Class licenceholder may work with both friable and bonded asbestos products.
- 3. Insurance** – check that your contractor holds public liability insurance with asbestos inclusion and ask to see a certificate of currency for the insurance policy. You may also wish to see evidence of their WorkCover insurance.
- 4. Safe Removal Control Plan** – ask to see this Plan which will detail the contractor's process for removal and disposal of asbestos from the site.
- 5. Disposal** – the safe disposal of asbestos is strictly governed by the *Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM)*. Ask to see the contractor's or asbestos transporter's documentation.
- 6. Clearance Certificate** – obtain a clearance certificate from a qualified person other than the person who undertook the asbestos removal work.