



**SPREP**  
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional  
Environment Programme



This initiative is supported by **PacWastePlus**-a 72 month project funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to **sustainably and cost effectively improve regional management of waste and pollution.**

# MODEL ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT POLICY

July 2022



This **Model Asbestos Management Policy** was developed to assist governments across the Pacific islands and Timor-Leste to formulate asbestos policies and to promote a consistent approach to asbestos management and is designed for governments to adapt an existing asbestos management policy or to develop a new one.



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**SPREP Library Cataloguing-in-Publication**

Model asbestos management policy. Apia,  
Samoa: SPREP, 2022.  
59 p. 29 cm.

**ISBN:** 978-982-04-1129-6 (print)  
978-982-04-1130-2 (ecopy)

1. Asbestos – Environmental aspects. 2. Asbestos -  
Law and legislation. I. Pacific Regional Environment  
Programme (SPREP). II. Title.

363.179 1

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The development of this Model Regional Asbestos Management Policy has been coordinated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme's PacWastePlus Programme. It is designed as a model for National Governments to consider when developing their asbestos management policy. The content of this model policy is current at the time of publication. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and completeness, no responsibility is taken, nor guarantee given, by SPREP with respect to errors or omissions in the materials contained in the model policy. The contents do not constitute legal advice, are not intended to be a substitute for legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. SPREP does not accept any responsibility or liability regarding your use of any information given in this model policy.

**Acknowledgment:** This Model policy draws heavily on the work undertaken by the Australian organization, Local Government of New South Wales (LGNSW) on behalf of the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities Working Group. The guide, "*Developing your Ministry's Asbestos Policy: A guide to the Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Ministries*" explains how one may tailor sections of this model asbestos policy in formulating an asbestos policy.



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Our vision: A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

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# PacWastePlus Programme

The Pacific – European Union (EU) Waste Management Programme, PacWastePlus, is a 72-month programme funded by the EU and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to improve regional management of waste and pollution sustainably and cost-effectively.

## About PacWastePlus

The impact of waste and pollution is taking its toll on the health of communities, degrading natural ecosystems, threatening food security, impeding resilience to climate change, and adversely impacting social and economic development of countries in the region. The PacWastePlus programme will generate improved economic, social, health, and environmental benefits by enhancing existing activities and building capacity and sustainability into waste management practices for all participating countries.

Countries participating in the PacWastePlus programme are: *Cook Islands, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.*

## KEY OBJECTIVES

### Outcomes & Key Result Areas

The overall objective of PacWastePlus is “to generate improved economic, social, health and environmental benefits arising from stronger regional economic integration and the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment”.

The specific objective is “to ensure the safe and sustainable management of waste with due regard for the conservation of biodiversity, health and wellbeing of Pacific Island communities and climate change mitigation and adaptation requirements”.

### Key Result Areas

- Improved data collection, information sharing, and education awareness
- Policy & Regulation - Policies and regulatory frameworks developed and implemented.
- Best Practices - Enhanced private sector engagement and infrastructure development implemented
- Human Capacity - Enhanced human capacity

Learn more about the PacWastePlus programme by visiting



<https://pacwasteplus.org/>

# About Regional Asbestos Project

The management and disposal of asbestos and asbestos containing materials (ACM) is an ongoing concern in the Pacific region. In seeking to improve the ways that asbestos and asbestos containing materials are managed, our project's focus is to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres in order to eliminate asbestos-related diseases.

Asbestos is a known health hazard and may be present in buildings and pipes throughout the Pacific. A 2016 study estimated some 188,000m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential asbestos was present in Pacific islands, of which some 146,000 m<sup>2</sup> (78%) was confirmed as a high or moderate risk to human health (SPREP 2016).

When products containing asbestos are damaged or become degraded over time, asbestos fibres are exposed and may become airborne. Health risks are exacerbated in natural disasters, with destructive cyclones damaging products such as asbestos roofing and cladding, an issue of increasing concern as the impacts of climate change are experienced across the region.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that when a country stops using asbestos, their asbestos-related disease burden decreases over time. In contrast, countries that continue to use asbestos are likely to have a substantial burden of asbestos-related disease in the future due to their past and ongoing asbestos use. Reducing exposure without addressing ongoing import and use are insufficient to eliminate asbestos-related diseases (*Kameda et al, 2014*).

## PacWastePlus Regional Asbestos Project

The PacWastePlus Regional Asbestos Project will support countries in executing solutions, both legislative and policy driven, to preventing exposure to asbestos fibre, and thereby reduce asbestos-related diseases.

The activities to be delivered by the PacWastePlus Regional Asbestos Project are:

- Promote the understanding of asbestos exposure risks
- Implement legislative/regulatory bans on the manufacture, use, reuse, import, transport, storage, or sale of all forms of asbestos and ACMs
- Create and support the adoption of an ACM Code of Practice
- Provide support tools/documents to properly manage and control ACM.

The project will achieve these outcomes through direct work with countries, and development of tools and guidance as described in the following schematic.

The technical resources will be supported through the production and dissemination of a variety of community and government resources, and provision of training to government workers involved in the management of asbestos.

Learn more about our regional asbestos project: <https://pacwasteplus.org/regional-project/804/>



# FOREWORD

Government plays a critical role in reducing the risks posed by asbestos.

A wide range of government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies have been enlisted to address the unfortunate legacy of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in building materials, on land through illegal dumping, and in debris from natural disasters, as well as naturally occurring asbestos.

This Model Asbestos Management Policy was developed to assist governments across the Pacific islands and Timor-Leste to formulate asbestos policies and to promote a consistent approach to asbestos management.

The Model Asbestos Management Policy is designed for governments to adapt an existing asbestos management policy or to develop a new one.

A Guide to developing an asbestos management policy based on the Model Asbestos Management Policy has also been prepared. The Guide also offers background information and advice for Ministries.

The Model Asbestos Management Policy was developed by the PacWastePlus Programme Management Unit with input from consultants, consideration of regional needs, and assessment of existing asbestos policies in the region.



***Sefanaia Nawadra***

*Director General*

*Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme*

# Why develop an Asbestos Management Policy?

The first call for a universal ban on the mining, manufacture, and use of asbestos occurred more than two decades ago (*Collegium Ramazzini 1999*). All forms of asbestos have been banned in many countries, and safer products have replaced many materials that once were made with it. Nonetheless, many countries still use, import, and export asbestos and asbestos-containing products.

More than 30 years ago, asbestos was declared a proven human carcinogen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (1986), the International Agency for Research on Cancer (1977) of the World Health Organization (WHO), and the U.S. National Toxicology Program (1980). The scientific community is in overwhelming agreement that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos. Moreover, there is no evidence of a threshold level below which there is no risk of disease, i.e., mesothelioma.

People can be exposed to asbestos by breathing in air that contains and/or is contaminated with asbestos fibres. Potential health problems may occur if asbestos fibres become airborne and are ingested. Even limited or short-term exposure to asbestos fibres, including 'second-hand' exposure can be harmful.

The diseases that may arise from inhaling airborne asbestos include:

- asbestosis (scarring of lung tissue)
- mesothelioma (malignant tumours, cancers that develop around the lungs or intestine)
- pleural plaques (thickening of membranes around the lungs)
- cancer of the lung, larynx, and ovary.



# How to Use This Model Policy

This model policy should be tailored to develop an Asbestos Management Policy.

*Advice and instructions are provided in dotted boxes throughout the Model Policy. It is intended that all dotted boxes be removed from the final policy, as they are provided for development purposes only.*

***Text written in Red indicates standard wording that will likely need to be modified to reflect the Ministry / Government Policy / Legislation or process. Careful attention should be paid to these areas to ensure the text is replaced with appropriate language that suits the specific Country / Ministry context.***

**Policy statements** are provided in boxes for easy identification and differentiation from the contextual text, which is also provided for each section of the policy. **Ministries may choose to keep the contextual text in its own policy, or only adopt the policy statements.**

The following table provides instructions (*for each section of the Model Policy*) to assist to adapt the Model Policy to suit specific legislative and management frameworks.

Section	Instructions for Adapting to Local Policy
<b>Scope</b> <b>Purpose</b> <b>Objectives</b> <b>Application</b>	These sections are recommended to be included in their entirety
<b>Responsibility</b>	Insert specific roles and responsibilities
<b>Relationship to other Policies, Procedures and Guidelines</b>	Insert references to relevant documents.
<b>Review of this Policy</b>	Insert relevant timeframe for policy review
<b>Managing ACM on Land and in structures (three parts)</b> <b><i>Part 1: Information for the regulated community</i></b> <b><i>Part 2: Asbestos Containing Materials Management and Control for Government Lands or Structures</i></b> <b><i>Part 3: Management of Asbestos: importation and the development of a National Asbestos Information System</i></b>	<p>These three sections include relevant information for the management of ACM and should be used in tandem with an ACM code of practice.</p> <p>These sections should be included or deleted as appropriate for a country's legal and/or operational requirements and context.</p>
<b>Appendices</b>	These documents may be included or deleted as appropriate for a country's legal and/or operational requirements and context.

**[Insert full name of Governmental  
Ministry /Department**

**Asbestos Management Policy**

**insert year]**



**Ministry disclaimer:**

- Here Ministry may wish to include:
- Any standard policy disclaimer Ministry may have
- A specific disclaimer prepared by Ministry for this policy, or
- The disclaimer provided below.]

This policy was formulated to be consistent with Ministry's legislative obligations and within the scope of Ministry's powers. This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation, guidelines, and codes of practice. In the case of any discrepancies, the most recent legislation should prevail.

This policy is based upon the *Model Asbestos Management Policy* developed by SPREP's PacWastePlus Programme with the support of the European Union's Delegation to the Pacific to promote a consistent Government approach to asbestos management across the Pacific and Timor-Leste.

This policy does not constitute legal advice. Legal advice should be sought in relation to particular circumstances and liability will not be accepted for losses incurred as a result of reliance on this policy

## Administrative information

[Ministry to insert the following information in the policy or attach this information to the policy in Ministry's record keeping system:

<b>File number or Policy number</b> (Ministry may wish to assign a number to the policy based on any record keeping system)	File number / Policy number
<b>Document status</b> (Ministry to select one)	Draft / Final
<b>Version number</b> (assigned by Ministry)	Version number
<b>Date last modified or Amendment history</b> (Ministry to select one)	Insert date/s
<b>Created by</b>	Staff member/s who created the policy
<b>Approved by</b> (It may be appropriate to remove this once policy has been adopted by Ministry)	Staff member who approved the policy
<b>Date policy first adopted by Ministry</b>	Insert date
<b>Effective date</b>	Insert date
<b>Review period</b>	This policy will be reviewed at the time of any relevant legislative changes, or may be reviewed at a minimum, every three years.
<b>Review date</b>	Insert date
<b>Responsibility for review</b>	Staff member/s responsible for ensuring the policy is current and revised as necessary
<b>Date presented to the Work Health and Safety Committee</b>	Insert date
<b>Document distribution</b>	Internal / External
<b>Document owner</b>	Staff member/s responsible for maintaining the accuracy of the document
<b>Contact person for further information</b>	Name, position, contact details of person/s who may be contacted by staff members and members of the public for more information

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## Definitions and Acronyms

*Ministry to add details of relevant terminology as determined by their national legislation. The terms included below are provided for considered use.*

### Definitions

The following is a comprehensive, technical definition of asbestos that is consistent with Pacific metropolitan countries.

**airborne asbestos** means any fibres of asbestos small enough to be made airborne. For the purposes of monitoring airborne asbestos fibres, only respirable fibres are counted.

**asbestos** means the asbestiform varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock forming minerals including the following:

- actinolite asbestos
- grunerite (or amosite) asbestos (brown)
- anthophyllite asbestos
- chrysotile asbestos (white)
- crocidolite asbestos (blue)
- tremolite asbestos
- a mixture that contains 1 or more of these minerals

**asbestos containing material (ACM)** means any material or thing that, as part of its design, contains asbestos.

**asbestos-contaminated dust or debris (ACD)** means dust or debris that has settled within a workplace and is, or is assumed to be, contaminated with asbestos.

**asbestos register** is a document that outlines all the ACMs within a building or at a location.

**asbestos-related work** means work involving asbestos that is permitted under the Asbestos *Code of Practice*, other than asbestos removal work.

**asbestos removal licence** means an asbestos removal licence issued by [add authority name].

**asbestos removal work** means work involving the removal of asbestos or asbestos containing material (ACM)

**asbestos removalist** means a person conducting a business or undertaking who carries out asbestos removal work.

**asbestos waste** means any waste that contains asbestos. This includes asbestos or asbestos containing material (ACM) removed and disposable items used during asbestos removal work including plastic sheeting and disposable tools.

**certifying authority** means a person who is authorised by or under section [add section number] of the [Add Act name].

**competent person** means: a person who has acquired through training or experience the knowledge and skills of relevant asbestos removal industry practice **and holds:**

- a certification in relation to the specified VET course for asbestos assessor work, or
- a tertiary qualification in occupational health and safety, occupational hygiene, science, building, construction, or environmental health.

**contaminant** means any substance that may be harmful to health or safety.

**contamination of land** means the presence in, on or under the land of a substance at a concentration above the concentration at which the substance is normally present in, on or under (respectively) land in the same locality, being a presence that presents a risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment

**control measure**, in relation to a risk to health and safety, means a measure to eliminate or minimise the risk.

**demolition work** means work to demolish or dismantle a structure, or part of a structure that is loadbearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure, but does not include:

- the dismantling of formwork, falsework, or other structures designed or used to provide support, access, or containment during construction work, or
- the removal of power, light, or telecommunication poles.
- development means:
  - the use of land
  - the subdivision of land
  - the erection of a building
  - the carrying out of a work
  - the demolition of a building or work
- any other act, matter or thing referred to in section [Ministry to add Act Name].

**emergency service organisation** includes any of the following:

- [Ministry to add details]

**exposure standard for asbestos** is a Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) of 0.1 fibres/ml of air measured in a person's breathing zone and expressed as a time weighted average fibre concentration calculated over an eight-hour working day and measured over a minimum period of four hours in accordance with a method determined by the relevant regulator.

**friable asbestos** means material that:

- is in a powder form or that can be crumbled, pulverised, or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry
- contains asbestos.

**health** means physical and psychological health.

**health monitoring**, of a person, means monitoring the person to identify changes in the person's health status because of exposure to certain substances.

**independent**, in relation to clearance inspections and air monitoring means:

- not involved in the removal of the asbestos
- not involved in a business or undertaking involved in the removal of the asbestos, in relation to which the inspection or monitoring is conducted.

**in situ asbestos** means asbestos or ACM fixed or installed in a structure, equipment, or plant, but does not include naturally occurring asbestos.

**licence holder** means, in the case of an asbestos assessor licence – the person who is licensed:

- to carry out air monitoring during asbestos removal work
- to carry out clearance inspections of asbestos removal work
- to issue clearance certificates in relation to asbestos removal work, or
  - in the case of an asbestos removal licence – the person conducting the business or undertaking to whom the licence is granted, or
  - in the case of a major hazard facility licence – the operator of the major hazard facility to whom the licence is granted or transferred.

**licensed asbestos assessor** means a person who holds an asbestos assessor licence.

**licensed asbestos removalist** means a person conducting a business or undertaking who is licensed under the [Add Act name] to carry out asbestos removal work.

**licensed asbestos removal work** means asbestos removal work for which an asbestos removal licence is required.

**National Asbestos Information System** is a database kept by the Ministry of properties, locations and structures identified to potentially contain asbestos and/or ACMs.

**non-friable asbestos** means material containing asbestos that is not friable asbestos, including material containing asbestos fibres reinforced with a bonding compound. **Note.** Non-friable asbestos may become friable asbestos through deterioration (see definition of friable asbestos).

**occupational hygienist** means a person with relevant qualifications and experience in asbestos management who is a full member of the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH) or other accredited occupation health organisation as determined by *[add authority name]* that can assess health risks in a workplace.

**occupier** includes a tenant or other lawful occupant of premises, not being the owner.

**officer** means an officer as defined in the *[Add Act name]*.

**orphan waste** means materials that have been placed or disposed of on a premises unlawfully that may have the potential to pose a risk to the environment or public health.

**person conducting a business or undertaking** (PCBU) a 'person' is defined in laws dealing with interpretation of legislation to include a body corporate (company), unincorporated body or association and a partnership.

**personal protective equipment** means anything used or worn by a person to minimise risk to the person's health and safety, including air supplied respiratory equipment.

**respirable asbestos fibre** means an asbestos fibre that:

- are less than three micrometres wide
- more than five micrometres long
- has a length to width ratio of more than 3:1

**skip (or skip bin)** is a large open-topped waste container designed for loading onto a truck

**structure** means anything that is constructed, whether fixed or moveable, temporary or permanent, and includes: buildings, masts, towers, framework, pipelines, transport infrastructure, and underground works (shafts or tunnels) any component of a structure or part of a structure

**volunteer** means a person who is acting on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses).

**waste** includes:

- any substance (whether solid, liquid, or gaseous) that is discharged, emitted or deposited in the environment in such volume, constituency or manner as to cause an alteration in the environment, or
- any discarded, rejected, unwanted, surplus, or abandoned substance, or
- any otherwise discarded, rejected, unwanted, surplus, or abandoned substance intended for sale or for recycling, processing, recovery, or purification by a separate operation from that which produced the substance, or
- any process, recycled, re-used or recovered substance produced wholly or partly from waste that is applied to land, or used as fuel, but only in the circumstances prescribed by the regulations, or
- any substance prescribed by the regulations made under the *[Add Act name]* to be waste.

**waste facility** means any premises used for the storage, treatment, processing, sorting, or disposal of waste (except as provided by the regulations).

**worker** a person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:

- an employee, or
- a contractor or subcontractor, or
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person’s business or undertaking, or
- an outworker, or
- an apprentice or trainee, or
- a student gaining work experience, or
- a volunteer, or
- a person of a prescribed class.

**workplace** a workplace is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. Place includes: a vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other mobile structure, and any waters and any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters.

### Acronyms

*Ministry to add details of relevant Acronyms relevant to this Policy*

Acronym	Meaning
<b>ACD</b>	Asbestos Containing Dust
<b>ACM</b>	Asbestos Containing Material
<b>ARA</b>	Appropriate Regulatory Authority

### Key Legislative Instruments, Regulations, Policies & Guidelines

*Ministry to add details of relevant legislation that influenced or supported by Policy*

Title	Description of link to Asbestos Management



## Scope

### **Advisory Note**

*Depending on any International Conventions ratified by the National government, or and legislative instruments, the scope should be developed from the existing management framework. A template Scope is provided below as appropriate text where no national asbestos framework currently exists.*

This document outlines the Ministry’s Policy in relation to the management of asbestos and ACM that is under the regulatory control of [\[Ministry to add reference\]](#)

This Policy seeks to align Ministry activities and management processes to achieve the following key principles:

- Ensuring any asbestos and ACM will not pose a risk to human health or the environment
- Providing information to support decision making and to inform the community of Ministry requirements.

The policy provides information for Ministry workers, the local community and wider public.

[Part 1](#) of the policy includes the sections that are likely to be of most interest to the local community and wider public. [Part 2](#) is information that applies to workers associated with Ministry including employees, contractors, consultants, and volunteers.

The policy applies to friable, non-friable (bonded), and naturally occurring asbestos (where applicable).

The policy outlines Ministry’s commitment and responsibilities in relation to safely managing asbestos and contains general advice. For specific advice, individuals are encouraged to contact Ministry or the appropriate organisation

The policy does not provide detail on specific procedures. Practical guidance on how to manage risks associated with asbestos and ACM can be found in [\[Ministry to add appropriate reference\]](#) the Government’s Asbestos Code of Practice.

## Purpose

*A template Purpose is provided below as appropriate text where no national asbestos framework currently exists. The Ministry should confirm the purpose of the Policy through appropriate consultation, to ensure any Policy addresses the needs of the country.*

The purpose of the Asbestos Management Policy is to provide a framework for the Ministry to appropriately manage asbestos and ACM through the [\[reference approved legislative process\]](#) process, and in doing so, ensure the Ministry acts in “good faith” with its legislative obligations.

This policy outlines:

- *Ministry and other organisation's role in managing asbestos*
- *Ministry's relevant regulatory powers*
- *Ministry's approach to dealing with sites contaminated by asbestos and during emergencies or incidents*
- *Advice for residents on renovating homes that may contain asbestos*
- *Ministry's development approval process for developments that may involve asbestos and conditions of consent*
- *Regulation procedures for asbestos waste management*
- *Ministry's approach to managing ACMs in Ministry workplaces*
- *Policy regarding the importation of asbestos and ACMs*

The Policy sets out the preferred practice of Ministry Officers in relation to:

- *Identifying, evaluating, and managing asbestos and ACM through the compliance processes*
- *Recording, managing, and disclosing asbestos related information*
- *Preventing or minimising the potential for community exposure.*

It is not the intent of this Policy that an act or omission of any Officer of the Ministry shall be called into question or held to be invalid on the grounds of failure to comply with this Policy.

## Application

*A template Application statement is provided below for considered use.*

This Policy relates to the Ministry's responsibility in asbestos and ACM management matters as the regulatory authority responsible for asbestos management.

This Policy applies to all *[Ministry to add reference]* staff.

## Responsibility

### **Advisory Note**

*Each Ministry to insert specific staff roles and responsibilities for policy implementation in the following table. Current information included in the table is for guidance only. It is recommended that Ministries include role descriptions that are unlikely to date following potential Ministry restructures.*

## Educating Residents

Ministry shall assist residents to access appropriate information and advice on the:

- prohibition on the use and re-use of ACMs
- requirements in relation to development, land management, and waste management
- risks of exposure to asbestos
- safe management of ACMs
- safe removal and disposal of minor quantities of ACMs.

Educational information and website links for educational materials can be found in **Appendices A and B**.

## Managing Land

Ministry is responsible for managing public land. This may include land with naturally occurring asbestos as described in section 5 and land contaminated with asbestos as outlined in section 9.

## Managing Waste

Where Ministry is the appropriate regulatory authority, Ministry is responsible for:

- *Issuing clean up notices to address illegal storage or disposal of asbestos waste or after an emergency or incident under the (Ministry to provide Act name).*
- *Issuing prevention or clean up notices where asbestos waste has been handled (including stored, transported, or disposed of) in an unsatisfactory manner under the (Ministry to provide Act name).*
- *Issuing penalty infringement notices for improper transport of asbestos under the (Ministry to provide Act name).*
- *Operating licensed landfill facility/facilities that accept/s ACM.*
- *A private business that operates a licensed landfill facility/ facilities that accepts ACM and asbestos waste.*

## Regulatory Responsibilities

Ministry has regulatory responsibilities under the following legislation, policies, and standards in situations where Ministry is the appropriate regulatory authority or planning authority:

- **Ministry to tailor text if applicable or delete if not applicable.**

The situations in which Ministry has a regulatory role in the safe management of asbestos are listed in *Table 1*.

*Table 1: Situations in which Ministry has a regulatory role in managing asbestos*

Issue	Ministry's role	Section
<b>Contaminated land</b>	Record known asbestos site contamination and for Ministry workplaces, record on Ministry's asbestos register.  Notify stakeholders of land use planning policy requirements relating to contamination.  Manage residential asbestos contaminated land	<a href="#">Section 9</a>
<b>Demolition</b>	Approve demolition under the <i>[Ministry to add Act name]</i> .	<a href="#">Section 11</a>
<b>Development assessment</b>	Assess development applications for approval under the <i>[Ministry to add Act name]</i>  Set conditions of consent for renovations, alterations, additions, demolitions, or other developments requiring consent and which may involve disturbance of ACMs.  Ensure compliance with development conditions.  Apply conditions relating to development involving friable and non-friable asbestos material under the relevant legislation and planning codes and as outlined in section 9.	<a href="#">Section 11</a>
<b>Emergencies and incidents</b>	Regulate the Clean-up of asbestos waste following emergencies where sites are handed over to the Ministry or a local resident by an emergency service organisation. Ministry may consider the need to issue a Clean-up notice, prevention notice or cost compliance notice under the <i>[Ministry to add Act name]</i> .	<a href="#">Section 10</a>

Issue	Ministry's role	Section
<b>Residential premises</b>	<p>Respond to any public health risks (risks to Ministry workers and wider public) relating to the removal of ACMs or asbestos work at residential properties that does not involve a business or undertaking.</p> <p>Respond to complaints about unsafe work at a residential property that is undertaken by a resident.</p> <p>Respond to public health risks posed by derelict properties or asbestos materials in residential settings.</p>	<a href="#">Section 10</a>
<b>Waste</b>	<p>Manage waste facilities in accordance with environmental protection legislation.</p> <p>Respond to illegal storage, illegal dumping, and orphan waste.</p> <p>Regulate non-complying transport of ACMs.</p>	<a href="#">Section 12</a>

## Responsibilities to Workers

Ministry is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities to workers under [Ministry to add Act name] and maintaining a safe work environment through the Ministry's:

- general responsibilities
- education, training, and information for workers
- health monitoring for workers
- procedures for identifying and managing ACMs in Ministry premises

These responsibilities are outlined in [Part 2](#).

## Other Stakeholders Involved in Managing Asbestos

Ministry is committed to working collaboratively with other government agencies and where appropriate, other stakeholders as needed to respond to asbestos issues.

## Specific Roles Delegated Under this Policy

Position Title	Responsibility
[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: <b>Manager, Development &amp; Environment Compliance</b> ]	[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: Responsible for the implementation and regular review of the policy, and for ensuring staff are sufficiently trained to implement the policy]
[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: <b>Environmental Health Officer</b> ]	[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: Provide support and advice on implementation of the policy]
[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: <b>Customs Officer</b> ]	[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: Provide support and advice on implementation of the policy]
[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: <b>Information Officer</b> ]	[MINISTRY TO INSERT, FOR EXAMPLE: Provide support and advice on implementation of the policy]



## Relationship to International Conventions and Agreements, and other National Policies, Procedures, and/or Guidelines

### **Advisory Note**

*Insert relevant policies and procedures below that relate specifically to implementation of the Asbestos management Policy.*

*Documents relevant to all National Ministries should be included in the below section.*

An *Asbestos Free Pacific – A Regional Strategy and Action Plan* (SPREP 2011) was adopted at the 22nd SPREP Meeting (Samoa) in 2011. The strategy was co-sponsored by SPREP and WHO. The strategy outlines the serious potential health risks that asbestos materials and wastes pose in the Pacific. The focus of the strategy was to act on existing asbestos materials and waste, particularly building materials.

The vision of the strategy is: ***“An asbestos-free Pacific that reduces negative environmental and public health impacts in Pacific Island countries.”***

Following the release of the report, *The State of Asbestos in the Pacific* (SPREP 2016), the 27th SPREP Meeting of Officials held in September 2016 in Niue, discussed asbestos in the Pacific as Agenda Item 9.3.4. The meeting endorsed the following:

1. Note the *‘State of the Asbestos in the Pacific’* synthesis report produced under the PacWaste project which summarises the findings of the project's Regional Asbestos Baseline Survey
2. Endorse a Pacific-wide ban on asbestos imports
3. Direct the Secretariat to progress a Pacific-wide ban on asbestos imports through Cleaner Pacific 2025 and related project envelopes.

In the 28th SPREP Meeting of Officials held in Apia Samoa in September 2017, Agenda item 13.1 was adopted by members States, committing them to develop and implement a Pacific wide ban on the importation, re-sale and re-use of products containing asbestos.

### **Support for a ban from key international agencies**

Major international agencies have endorsed banning asbestos and continue to support countries to implement this action. Notable entities include:

- the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** - resolution adopted at the 95<sup>th</sup> General Conference in June 2006, which committed the ILO to actively promote a global asbestos ban. This resolution is known as Safety in the Use of Asbestos (*C162 Convention*) and was a significant catalyst for action; and
- the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**- in October 2006, the WHO published a *Policy Statement on the Elimination of Asbestos-Related Diseases* calling for a worldwide ban.
- the **International Ban Asbestos Secretariat** provides for the exchange of information between groups and individuals working to achieve a global asbestos ban and seeking to alleviate the damage caused by widespread asbestos use.
- The **International Commission on Occupational Health**, has endorsed the "Call for an international ban for asbestos" approved by the ICOH 2nd General Assembly on 1 September 2000

## Relevant international conventions

International conventions provide an impetus for addressing issues related to hazardous chemicals or hazardous wastes. Signatories are obliged to enact national regulations to bring the conventions into the national regulatory framework. It is these national laws and regulations that then provide the implementing mechanisms to implement the conventions.

Prerequisites to successful legislative and regulatory reform are government commitment and action, country capacity building, and mechanisms for effective law enforcement.

**ILO C162 Asbestos Convention** – C162 offers governments a guideline for achieving a total asbestos ban policy and focuses on prevention of occupational exposure to asbestos. The principle of ensuring that workers' exposure to asbestos remains below a specific limit (Article 15) was adopted on June 24, 1986.

The Convention was adopted at the 72nd session of the International Labour Conference, it was established in 1986 and came in to force in 1989.

**Rotterdam Convention** on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam Convention). Promulgated on 10 September 1998. Hazardous chemicals are listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention. This listing then triggers obligations for information exchange to ensure there is informed consent prior to the import of these chemicals.

Whilst most asbestos types are included, the most common industrial asbestos, chrysotile (white asbestos), is omitted from the list. Despite widespread support amongst Parties, and several attempts, agreement to list chrysotile asbestos has not been achieved. In May 2017 in Geneva, Pacific Island Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (Cook Islands, Tonga, Samoa, and Republic of the Marshall Islands) spoke in support of the listing of chrysotile asbestos in Annex III of the Convention. The intervention was also supported by Kiribati, which was present at the Convention but is not a Party.

**Basel Convention** on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention). Adopted in 1989. Any waste that contains asbestos falls under the Convention, which aims to reduce movements of hazardous waste between nations, particularly the transfer from developed to less developed countries. Import and export controls, along with strict notification procedures are important protection measures. The Basel Convention is only activated once materials meet the definition of a waste.

**Waigani Convention** to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region. Modelled on the Basel Convention and provides the regional implementation instrument in the South Pacific Region. The Waigani Convention entered into force in 2001.

**International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)** of 1974, 2009 Amendments, prohibits the new installation of materials which contain asbestos on all ships. These regulations under the International Maritime Organisation became effective 1 January 2011

This Policy is supported by several legislative instruments, regulations, guidelines, and other relevant documents, as listed below:

- *[MINISTRY TO INSERT REFERENCES TO RELEVANT LOCAL DOCUMENTS]*

## Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed on *[MINISTRY TO INSERT REVIEW DATE]*. The policy will also be subject to review at an earlier time in response to amendments to legislation, policy or guidelines that may directly affect the intent and application of the Policy.

*Ministry* reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy. The *[Ministry to add Authorised Officer]* may allow variations to the policy for minor issues in individual cases.

Part 1 – Asbestos in [**Country  
Name**]: Information for the  
Regulated Community





## Contamination of Land and Derelict Structures with Asbestos

Background information on contamination of land with asbestos and potential disturbance of asbestos contaminated sites can be found in [Appendix A](#) under sections 2 and 3. The nature of asbestos contamination of land can vary significantly and there can be several different mechanisms available to address this contamination depending upon its source and extent.

### Responsibilities for Contaminated Land

Responsibility for cleaning up contaminated land lies with the person responsible for contaminating the land or the relevant landowner.

Ministry may issue a clean-up notice to the occupier of premises at or from which Ministry reasonably suspects that a pollution incident has occurred, or is occurring, requiring asbestos waste to be removed (*[Ministry to add Act name]*).

Ministry may also issue prevention notices (*[Ministry to add Act name]*) to ensure good environmental practice. If a person does not comply with a prevention notice given to the person, Ministry employees, agents or contractors may take action to cause compliance with the notice.

Any reasonable costs incurred by Ministry in monitoring or enforcing clean up and prevention notices may be recovered through a compliance cost notice (*[Ministry to add Act name]*). Ministry shall keep records of: tasks undertaken; the hours Ministry employees have spent undertaking those tasks; and expenses incurred.

For sites that are 'significantly contaminated' and require a major remediation program, the Ministry is the lead regulatory authority.

### Finding out if Land is Contaminated

A person may request from Ministry a certificate containing advice on matters including whether Ministry has a policy to restrict the use of land due to risks from contamination.

Factual information relating to past land use and other matters relevant to contamination may also be provided, even when land use is not restricted.

Ministry records can only indicate known contaminated sites. Any site may potentially be contaminated; therefore, the Ministry may issue notices to landowners or occupiers requiring information about land it has reason to believe may be contaminated by asbestos.

### Duty to Report Contaminated Land

A person whose activities have contaminated land or a landowner whose land has been contaminated is required to notify the Ministry when they become aware of the contamination (*[Ministry to add Act name]*).

### Derelict Structures

Concerns regarding potential health risks from derelict properties may be directed to Ministry. Derelict properties include abandoned buildings, fire damaged buildings, and otherwise dilapidated buildings. Where derelict properties contain friable asbestos and asbestos is exposed, either from human activities or weathering, this poses a potential risk to public health.

Ministry may respond to derelict properties that pose a demonstrable public health risk using a range of regulatory tools according to the circumstances.

Ministry may issue a clean-up notice or prevention notice and compliance cost notice

Ministry may also order a person to demolish or remove a building if the building is so dilapidated as to present harm to its occupants or to persons or property in the neighbourhood ([*Ministry to add Act name*]). An order may require immediate compliance with its terms in circumstances which the person who gives the order believes constitute a serious risk to health or safety or an emergency ([*Ministry to add Act name*]). If a person fails to comply with the terms of an order, Ministry may act under [*Ministry to add Act name*] to give effect to the terms of the order, including the carrying out of any work required by the order.

## Responding to Emergencies and Incidents

Emergencies and incidents such as major collapses, cyclones, explosions, fires, storms, or vandalism can cause damage to buildings or land that contain asbestos. This may include working with other agencies in accordance with the appropriate disaster management policy for the event. Emergencies and incidents can create site contamination issues and potentially expose emergency service workers and the wider public to asbestos. Emergencies or incidents can arise from natural hazards, or from accidental or deliberate human activities including criminal activity.

### Responsibilities in the Clean-up After an Emergency or Incident

Ministry may play a role in ensuring that ACMs are cleaned up after an emergency or incident.

Ministry may issue a clean-up, prevention, **cost compliance, or penalty notice** as outlined in this policy. Alternatively, Ministry may act under the [*Ministry to add Act name*] as outlined in this policy.

Ministry will determine an appropriate response depending on the nature of the situation.

This may include to:

- Seek advice on the likely level of risk and appropriate controls required.
- Liaise with or consult the appropriate agencies.
- Inform emergency personnel of any hazards known to Ministry as soon as practicable.
- Follow the *Code of practice* on how to safely remove asbestos
- Ensure that any Ministry workers attending the site have appropriate training and are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Exclude the public from the site.
- Inform the public of the potential sources of exposure to asbestos, health risks and emergency management response.
- Minimise the risks posed by any remaining structures
- Address the risks posed by disturbed ACMs by engaging a licensed removalist or issuing a clean-up or prevention notice to ensure ACMs are removed for disposal.
- Ensure that the site is always kept damp, or sprayed with Polyvinyl Acetate (PVA) glue, particularly where friable asbestos is present, if considered appropriate (noting that in some instances this may not be appropriate, for example if there are live electrical conductors or if major electrical equipment could be permanently damaged or made dangerous by contact with water).
- Ensure that ACMs are disposed of at a facility licensed to accept asbestos waste and sight proof of appropriate disposal through weighbridge dockets or similar documentation.

## Advice to the Public Regarding Clean-up After an Emergency or Incident

During a clean up after an emergency or incident, the possibility of neighbours being exposed to asbestos fibres may be very low if precautions are taken to minimise the release and inhalation of asbestos dust and fibres.

As a precautionary measure, where Ministry is involved in a clean-up, Ministry may consider advising those in neighbouring properties to:

- avoid unnecessary outdoor activity and do not put any laundry outside during the clean up
- close all external doors and windows and stay indoors during the clean up
- consider avoiding using air conditioners that introduce air from outside into the home during the clean up
- dispose of any laundry that may have been contaminated with asbestos as asbestos waste after the clean-up (advice on disposing of asbestos waste is provided in [section 12](#))
- use a low-pressure hose on a spray configuration to remove visible dust from pathways after the clean up
- wipe dusty surfaces with a damp cloth and bag and dispose of the cloth as asbestos waste after the clean-up (advice on disposing of asbestos waste is provided in [section 12](#))
- any other measures recommended by an occupational hygienist following assessment of the situation.

## Government's Process for Assessing Construction, Renovations, and Demolition Work of Structures, both Residential and Commercial

This section applies to applications assessed under the *[Ministry to add Act name]* for construction, renovations, and demolition work of structures, both residential and commercial. This includes alterations and additions to residential development, which may include internal work as well as extensions to the existing main structure, or changes to outbuildings, sheds, or garages.

This section also covers renovations that do not require consent or a complying development certificate. Development consent is not required to maintain an existing structure. For example, the replacement of windows, doors and ceilings may involve the removal of asbestos but is categorised as exempt under the *[Ministry to add Act name]* and does not require consent.

In these instances, Ministry has an educative role in providing owners and occupiers with advice and information about the identification and safe management of asbestos.

### Responsibilities for Approving Development

**Ministry** is the consent authority for most applications for construction, renovations, and demolition work of structures, both residential and commercial in the country. The Ministry may impose conditions of consent and a waste disposal policy to ensure the safe removal of asbestos, where asbestos has been identified or may be reasonably assumed to be present.

## Providing Advice to Homeowners, Renovators, and Developers

**Ministry** is committed to providing information to minimise the risks from asbestos. Information is provided below and in [Appendix A](#). Documents in that appendix lists asbestos containing products that may be found around the home.

The key points are:

- Before any renovation, maintenance or demolition work is carried out, any asbestos or ACMs should be identified
- Where a material cannot be identified or it is suspected to be asbestos, it is best to assume that the material is asbestos and take appropriate precautions.
- If ACMs can be maintained in good condition it is recommended that they be safely contained, left alone and periodically checked to monitor their condition, until demolition or redevelopment.
- If asbestos materials cannot be safely contained, they should be removed consistent with an [asbestos code of practice](#).
- For demolition or redevelopment, any ACMs should be safely removed and disposed of prior to the work commencing.

Anyone who is undertaking renovations themselves without a contractor is encouraged to refer to [Appendices A](#) and [B](#) for more information and contact **Ministry** where they require further advice or clarification

## Identifying Asbestos

Information on common places where asbestos is likely to be found in residential, and commercial premises is provided in [Appendix A](#).

**Ministry** may provide information on a premises, including whether **Ministry** has a policy to restrict the use of land due to risks from asbestos contamination.

**Ministry** aims to ensure that records are, as far as possible, accurate. In some instances, **Ministry** may not have up-to-date information about asbestos for a property. **Ministry** may be able to provide general advice on the likelihood of asbestos being present on the land based on the age of the buildings or structures on the land. A general guide to the likelihood of asbestos presence based on building age is provided in [Appendix A](#).

The most accurate way to find out if a building or structure contains asbestos is to obtain an asbestos inspection by a person competent in the identification and assessment of asbestos, such as an occupational hygienist. This is highly advisable before undertaking major renovations to buildings constructed or containing materials from prior to 2004.

Property owners and agents are encouraged to inform any tenants or occupiers of the presence of asbestos and to address any potential asbestos hazards where appropriate.

Property owners who let their properties out are required to identify any asbestos within those properties before any work is carried out (this includes residential properties).

**All commercial properties that contain asbestos must have and maintain a current asbestos register and asbestos management plan.**

## Removing Asbestos, Refurbishments, and Demolitions

### Removing Asbestos at Domestic Premises

A person conducting a business or undertaking who is to carry out refurbishment or demolition of residential premises must ensure that all asbestos that is likely to be disturbed by the refurbishment or demolition is identified and, so far as reasonably practicable, is removed before the refurbishment or demolition is commenced.

Depending on the nature and quantity of asbestos to be removed, a licence may be required to remove the asbestos.

Friable asbestos must only be removed by a licensed removalist with an asbestos removal licence. Except in the case of the removal of:

- asbestos containing dust associated with the removal of non-friable asbestos, or
- asbestos containing dust that is not associated with the removal of friable or non-friable asbestos and is only a minor contamination (which is when the asbestos contamination is incidental and can be cleaned up in less than one hour).

All asbestos removal should be undertaken in accordance with the asbestos *code of practice on how to safely remove asbestos*.

If a residential premise is a workplace, the asbestos removalist must inform the following persons before asbestos removal work is carried out:

- the person who commissioned the work
- a person conducting a business or undertaking at the workplace
- the owner and occupier of the residential premises
- anyone occupying premises in the immediate vicinity of the workplace

In certain circumstances, a premise may be used for both residential and commercial purposes and is therefore classified as a workplace.

All licensed asbestos removal must be:

- supervised by a supervisor named to **Ministry**
- notified to **Ministry** at least five days prior to the work commencing.

### Obtaining Approval for Demolition

Demolition work is classified as high-risk construction work in the *[Ministry to add Act name]* and demolition licenses are required for some demolition work. In most circumstances demolition of a structure requires development consent under *[Ministry to add Act name]*. Applicants need to enquire to **Ministry** as to what type of approval is required. Where a development application is required **Ministry's** standard conditions need to be applied to ensure that asbestos is safely managed.

## Development Applications

The **Ministry** to insert, outline, or refer to **Ministry's** process for approving development which includes work that may involve ACMs. A development application may need to be prepared and it will be assessed in accordance with the requirements of relevant environmental planning instruments and the development standards established by **Ministry**. **Ministry** may undertake a site inspection as part of the application assessment.

### Conditions of Consent

*[Ministry to insert, outline, or refer to **Ministry's** conditions of consent relating to work that may involve asbestos.]*

## Compliance and Enforcement

### Responsibilities for Compliance and Enforcement

The controls rely on information being provided and checked by the certifying authority which may be either. by *[Ministry to add details of determining Authority]*. The Ministry may act on any development for which Ministry has issued the development consent.

### Compliance Strategies

Illegal works include:

- works that are undertaken without a required development consent or complying development certificate
- works that are undertaken that do not comply with the conditions of the development consent or complying development certificate.

Where Ministry becomes aware of illegal work involving asbestos or ACMs, Ministry will determine necessary action, as empowered by *[Ministry to add Act name]*. Action may include *[add details of powers under the Act]*.

*[Ministry may wish to include any strategies for monitoring and enforcing compliance or reference to any Ministry compliance manual or breach policy.]*

## Managing Asbestos as a Waste

It is illegal to dispose of asbestos waste in domestic garbage bins or to recycle, reuse, bury or illegally dump asbestos waste. Asbestos must not be placed in general waste skip bins, yet there have been instances where asbestos has been illegally placed in skip bins by third parties. Members of the public need to be aware of this hazard and may need to secure their skip bins to prevent a third party from illegally disposing of asbestos in the skip bin.

Asbestos waste (in any form) must only be disposed of at a landfill site that may lawfully receive asbestos waste.

### Responsibilities for Asbestos Waste Management

Ministry's responsibilities for asbestos waste management are:

*[Ministry to add details of any requirements or controls on asbestos management and licences].*

### Handling Asbestos Waste for Disposal

The asbestos *code of practice* provides guidance on waste containment and disposal, and controls applicable to all types of asbestos removal

### Transporting Asbestos Waste

The following requirements apply to the transport of asbestos waste and non-compliance with these requirements is an offence under *[Ministry to add details of offence, or to remove this sub-section]*.

- (a) any part of any vehicle in which the person transports the waste is covered, and leak-proof, during the transportation, and*
- (b) if the waste consists of bonded asbestos material-it is securely packaged during the transportation, and*
- (c) if the waste consists of friable asbestos material-it is kept in a sealed container during transportation, and*
- (d) if the waste consists of asbestos-contaminated soils-it is wetted down.*



## Disposing of Asbestos Waste at Government Waste Facilities

[If applicable, Ministry to insert information on any waste facilities that will accept asbestos waste (these may be Ministry operated and/or privately managed facilities) including:

- *the name/s of waste facility/ facilities*
- *hours of operation*
- *contact details*
- *any fees for disposing of asbestos waste*
- *any restrictions or additional conditions on receiving asbestos waste.*
- *where the abovementioned information can be found on Ministry's website*
- *any further details provided in the appendices.*

*If applicable, Ministry to note waste facilities that will not accept asbestos waste e.g., transfer stations.]*

Persons delivering waste to a landfill site must comply with the following requirements:

- a person delivering waste that contains asbestos to a landfill site must inform the landfill occupier of the presence of asbestos when delivering the waste.
- when unloading and disposing of asbestos waste at a landfill site, the waste must be unloaded and disposed of in such a manner as to prevent the generation of dust or the stirring up of dust.

*[If applicable, Ministry to insert instructions that relate to Ministry's conditions of consent regarding waste management.]*

## Situations where Asbestos Waste May Be Rejected from Waste Facilities

*Asbestos waste may be rejected from a waste facility if the waste is:*

- *not correctly packaged for delivery and disposal*
- *not disclosed by the transporter as being asbestos or ACMs, or*
- *taken to a waste facility that does not accept asbestos waste*

*Where waste is rejected, the waste facility must inform the transporter of the waste of a waste facility to which the waste may be transported, that is, a waste facility at which the waste can be legally accepted (as required by the Ministry to Name Act).*

## Illegal Dumping of Asbestos Waste

Illegal dumping is the unlawful deposit of waste onto land. That is waste materials dumped, tipped, or otherwise deposited onto private or public land where no licence or approval exists to accept such waste. Illegal landfilling, which is waste used as fill material, with or without the consent of the owner or occupier of the land and without the necessary Ministry approvals, is also considered to be illegal dumping and pollution of land.

Illegal dumping of asbestos waste in public places such as parks, streets or nature strips can attract regulatory action including:

- **Ministry to add details of penalties and codes/regulations**

The responsibility for cleaning up illegally dumped waste lies with the person or company that deposited the waste. If they cannot be identified the relevant occupier or landowner becomes the responsible party.

[Confirm Regulatory Authority] are the appropriate regulatory authority for illegal dumping

## Asbestos Remaining On-site

The disposal of asbestos on site is [Ministry to add details on if management of asbestos on site is allowable].

## Complaints and Investigations

Complaints and inquiries may be directed to **Ministry** about incidents in public places and private properties.

The **Ministry** will respond to complaints and inquiries regarding:

- **Ministry** requirements in relation to development, land management and waste management
- derelict properties
- general asbestos safety issues
- illegal dumping
- safe removal and disposal of minor quantities of asbestos materials
- unsafe work at a residential property conducted by a homeowner or tenant.

Complaints about **Ministry** in relation to asbestos may be directed to [add details of relevant Authority].



## Part 2 – Asbestos Containing Materials Management and Control for Government Lands or Structures





# Rights and Responsibilities of Workers at the Government workplace

## Duties of Workers at the Government Workplace

### Workers

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Accordingly, workers:

- must comply with this policy and any reasonable instruction or procedure relating to health and safety at the workplace
- must use any personal protective equipment provided, in accordance with information, training and reasonable instruction provided so far as the worker is reasonably able
- may cease, or refuse to carry out, work if the worker has a reasonable concern that to carry out the work would expose them, or other persons, to a serious health or safety risk, emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard
- should ensure they are using the latest version of all relevant procedures, plans, guidelines, and legislation.

Managers are responsible for ensuring workers who report to them have access to this policy and appropriate information, documentation, and training.

### Prohibited Work Activities

Ministry will not allow the use of the following on asbestos or asbestos containing material:

- high pressured water spray (unless for firefighting or fire protection purposes), or
- compressed air.

Ministry will not allow the following equipment to be used on asbestos or asbestos containing material:

- power tools
- brooms (note brooms are allowed for use on vinyl floor tiles), or
- any other implements that cause the release of airborne asbestos into the atmosphere

*[Ministry may wish to note any activities Ministry workers will not undertake or be allowed to undertake.]*

## Responsibilities of Government, to Government Workers

### The government's General Responsibilities

The Ministry has general responsibilities under the *[add details of any Acts that discuss employer responsibilities for worker safety or asbestos management]*. Accordingly, the Government will:

- not use any ACMs and will not cause or permit asbestos waste in any form to be reused or recycled
- ensure that exposure of a person at the workplace to airborne asbestos is eliminated so far as is reasonably practicable
- ensure that the exposure standard for asbestos is not exceeded in the workplace
- ensure that any contractors engaged to undertake the removal of asbestos are appropriately licensed *[delete if licences are not part of country legislative processes]*

The Government will not import asbestos or ACM. If plant or other materials are imported from countries where asbestos is not yet prohibited, the Ministry shall ensure the plant or materials do not contain asbestos prior to supply or use in the workplace.

## Education, Training, and Information for Workers

The Ministry will:

- provide any information, training, instruction, or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons at the workplace from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of Ministry business
- ensure workers who Ministry reasonably believes may be involved in asbestos removal work or the carrying out of asbestos-related work in the workplace are trained in the identification, safe handling and suitable control measures for asbestos and ACM.

*[Ministry may wish to insert: Any workers who are involved in any activity listed in Appendix A under section 3 on behalf of, or for, Ministry shall be provided with access to a copy of this policy and information and training suitable to their role and the activity.]*

*Ministry may wish to insert: Workers may be required to sign a statement to the effect that they acknowledge they have received, read, and understood a copy of Ministry's asbestos Policy and any relevant procedures, or alternatively workers may note this in Ministry's electronic record keeping system.*

*Ministry may wish to insert: Ministry may also provide information and training to Ministry employees who may need to respond to asbestos issues related to renovations and developments as outlined in [section 11.](#)]*

Topics training may cover are outlined in the asbestos code of practice on how to safely remove asbestos.

Education and training will only be provided by appropriately accredited individuals. *[Ministry may wish to note the asbestos training courses available locally which Ministry may arrange for workers to complete. Or Ministry may wish to place this information in the appendices and refer to the appendices.]*

*[Ministry may wish to insert: Education and training may include both initial induction and ongoing reinforcement on a regular basis. Ministry may wish to provide examples of how education and training will be delivered and reinforced such as toolbox meetings, general in-house training or on Ministry's intranet.]*

A record of asbestos training undertaken by each worker will be kept until five years after the day the worker ceases to work for Ministry. *[Ministry may wish to insert who is responsible for keeping the records, or how or where the records shall be kept.]*

A list of workers who have received the appropriate training to respond to asbestos hazards is available. *[Ministry to insert where this information can be accessed e.g., asbestos management plan, Ministry's intranet, or records management system.]*

## Health Monitoring for Workers

Ministry will ensure health monitoring is provided to a worker if they are carrying out licensed asbestos removal work, other ongoing asbestos removal work or asbestos-related work at the workplace for Ministry and are at risk of exposure to asbestos when carrying out the work.

Health counselling may be appropriate where a heightened sense of concern exists for individuals possibly exposed to elevated levels of airborne asbestos fibres.

*[Ministry may wish to refer to any plan / procedures / forms / record keeping systems that Ministry may have for health monitoring for workers and the Ministry employee responsible for coordinating the health monitoring. If Ministry does not have any plans or procedures.]*

# Identifying and Recording Asbestos Hazards in the Government Workplace

This section outlines how Ministry will identify and record asbestos hazards in the workplace. This section does not cover naturally occurring asbestos.

## Identifying Asbestos

Ministry will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all asbestos or ACMs at the workplace are identified by a competent person. If a material cannot be identified or accessed, it will be assumed to be asbestos. This does not apply if Ministry has reasonable grounds to believe that asbestos or ACM is not present.

### Material Sampling

The Ministry may choose to identify asbestos or ACM by arranging for a sample to be analysed. Where the Ministry arranges sampling of ACM, this will be undertaken by an appropriately trained and competent worker, or a competent person will be contracted to undertake this task. Analysis of the sample must only be carried out by an accredited laboratory, or a laboratory approved or operated by the regulator.

## Indicating the Presence and Location of Asbestos

Ministry will clearly indicate the presence and location of any asbestos or ACM identified or assumed at the workplace. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, Ministry will indicate the presence and location of the asbestos or ACM by a label.

## Asbestos Register

[Ministry is to select the applicable option and delete the other.

- Ministry has an asbestos register which can be found (insert soft copy location e.g.: on Ministry's intranet and electronic record keeping system) and is kept at the workplace (insert location of hard copy).
- Ministry will prepare an asbestos register and keep it at the workplace.]

Ministry's asbestos register will be maintained to ensure the register lists all identified (or assumed) asbestos in the workplace and information in the register is up to date. The asbestos register will be accessible, reviewed, revised, and otherwise managed as required by Ministry processes.

Ministry will ensure that any worker carrying out or intending to carry out work at a Ministry workplace that involves a risk of exposure to airborne asbestos, is given a copy of the asbestos register.

## Suspected Asbestos

If a worker suspect there is asbestos in a government workplace, they should inform their manager or supervisor. A competent worker should check the asbestos register for existing asbestos locations and control measures and may need to arrange for an inspection and sampling of the material. If it is likely that asbestos or suspected asbestos is present, the asbestos register will be updated, and workers will be notified of any newly identified asbestos locations.

Ministry may need to manage the suspected asbestos. If the suspected asbestos has been disturbed and has, or could, become airborne, Ministry may need to respond immediately.



# Managing Asbestos-Related Risks in the Government Workplace

## Asbestos Management Plan

[Ministry is to select the applicable option and delete the other.

- *Ministry will prepare an asbestos management plan for asbestos in the Ministry workplace.*
- *Ministry has an asbestos management plan for asbestos in the Ministry workplace which can be found (insert soft copy location e.g., on Ministry's intranet and electronic record keeping system) and is kept at the workplace (insert location of hard copy).]*

The asbestos management plan will be accessible, reviewed, revised, and otherwise managed as mandated Ministry processes.

## Management Options for Asbestos-Related Risks in the Government Workplace

The Government's asbestos management plan includes decisions and reasons for decisions about the management of asbestos at the workplace.

Options for managing asbestos-related risks include:

- removal of asbestos or ACMs (preferred wherever reasonably practicable)
- interim control measures: enclosure (only for non-friable asbestos), encapsulation (when the original asbestos bond is still intact) or sealing (where the sealed material is unlikely to be subject to mechanical damage) ACM, to be implemented along with regular inspections by a competent person
- leaving ACM in situ (deferring action).

The Ministry may undertake an asbestos risk assessment, in consultation with workers and/or their representatives, to inform decision-making. Only competent persons will perform risk assessments or any subsequent reviews or revisions of risk assessments.

For all asbestos work or asbestos-related work, safe work practices will be in place and suitable personal protective equipment will be used.

[Ministry may wish to include reference to any Ministry procedures for risk assessment or risk management, or the inclusion of risk ratings in Ministry's risk register. ]

## Sites Contaminated with Asbestos that are Government Workplaces

Where asbestos is identified as contaminating a workplace, the site will be included in the Ministry's asbestos register and asbestos management plan.

The Ministry may need to ensure that an exposure assessment is undertaken and that appropriate risk management options are determined and implemented.

For asbestos in soil or aggregate, a suitably qualified occupational hygienist must carry out an assessment if the material in the soil and aggregate is unknown or classified as friable.

The Ministry should engage specialists, who may include asbestos removalists, for all cases except in the case of minor, non-friable contaminations.

## Demolition or Refurbishment of Government Lands, Buildings, and Assets

The Ministry will ensure that before any demolition or refurbishment of a government structure or plant is undertaken, the asbestos register is reviewed, and a copy provided to the business undertaking the demolition or refurbishment. The Ministry will ensure that any asbestos that is likely to be disturbed is identified and so far, as is reasonably practicable removed.

## Removal of Asbestos in the Government Workplace

Removal of asbestos or ACMs in the Ministry workplace will be undertaken in accordance with the asbestos *code of practice on how to safely remove asbestos*.

For licensed asbestos removal work, a licensed asbestos removalist must meet the requirements of the *[Ministry to add details of the Instrument governing licences]* including the requirements to:

- *Ministry to add details of requirements for management of asbestos removal, requirements may include the following examples]*
- *prepare, supply, and keep an asbestos removal control plan*
- *obtain a copy of the asbestos register for the workplace before carrying out asbestos removal work at the workplace (this does not apply if the asbestos removal work is to be carried out at residential premises, for example cleaning up asbestos that has been illegally dumped at a residential premises)*
- *inform the person with management or control of the workplace that the licensed asbestos removal work is to be carried out at the workplace*
- *erect signs and barricades*
- *limit access to the asbestos removal area*
- *properly dispose of asbestos waste and dispose of, or treat, contaminated personal protective equipment*
- *arrange a clearance inspection and clearance certificate*

Where the Ministry is informed that asbestos removal work is to be carried out at the workplace, the Ministry will inform workers and those in the immediate vicinity of the workplace and limit access to the asbestos removal area.

## Asbestos Abatement Actions by Government Employees

*[Ministry may delete this section if Ministry employees are not involved in asbestos removal.]*

*A list of employees trained and nominated to remove asbestos as well as the nominated supervisors should be listed in Ministry's asbestos management plan.*

*Ministry will ensure that before any Ministry employee undertakes asbestos (or suspected asbestos) removal work they are:*

- *appropriately trained*
- *adequately supervised*
- *provided with appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing*
- *provided access to this policy*
- *provided with information about the health risks and health effects associated with exposure to asbestos and the need for, and details of, health monitoring.*

*Ministry may refer to any Ministry processes or templates e.g., for preparing safe work method statements.]*

## Asbestos Abatement Actions by Contractors

Where the Ministry commissions the removal of asbestos at the workplace, the Ministry will ensure asbestos removal work is carried out only by a licensed asbestos removalist who is appropriately licensed to carry out the work.

The Ministry is required to ensure that the work is carried out by a competent person who has been trained in the identification and safe handling of, and suitable control measures for, asbestos and ACM. The Ministry will therefore require a statement in a written contract or agreement with the licensed asbestos removalist that the licensed asbestos removalist who will undertake the work has been adequately trained and is provided with appropriate health monitoring by their employer.

The licensed asbestos removalist is to provide the following documentation prior to carrying out asbestos removal work:

- Asbestos removal control plan
- Public liability certificate of currency
- Workers' compensation certificate of currency

The Ministry will provide a copy of the asbestos register to the licensed asbestos removalist.

## Clearance Inspections and Certificates

[Ministry to confirm this element is included in processes and delete if not relevant].

Where Ministry commissions any licensed asbestos removal work, Ministry will ensure that once the licensed asbestos removal work has been completed, a clearance inspection is carried out and a clearance certificate is issued by an independent licensed asbestos assessor before the asbestos removal area is re-occupied.

The friable asbestos clearance certificate will require visual inspection as well as air monitoring of the asbestos removal site. Air monitoring is mandatory for all friable asbestos removal. The air monitoring must be conducted before and during asbestos removal work by an independent licensed asbestos assessor.

The friable asbestos clearance certificate is to state that there was no visible asbestos residue in the area or vicinity of the area where the work was carried out and that the airborne asbestos fibre level was less than the PEL.]

## Accidental Disturbance of Asbestos by Workers

In situations where asbestos is accidentally disturbed by Ministry work and has, or could, become airborne, the Ministry will act to minimise exposure of workers and the wider public to airborne asbestos. If Ministry has or is developing procedures for workers to follow if they accidentally disturb asbestos, the Ministry may refer to the procedures and remove the text below.

[If the Ministry does not have procedures for the accidental disturbance of asbestos, the Ministry may include the following text:

It may be appropriate that the Ministry:

- stop works in the vicinity of the asbestos immediately
- inform the site supervisor immediately, inform necessary workers and record the incident
- evacuate the area
- provide personal protective equipment and briefing to appropriately trained workers who will respond to the incident

- restrict access to the area and ensure only appropriately trained and equipped Ministry workers attend the site
- exclude the public from the site and provide information to the public if in a public area
- wet surfaces to reduce the dust levels
- prevent the spread of contamination by using wash down facilities
- provide information, training, and supervision to all workers potentially at risk
- implement an air monitoring program to assess asbestos exposure levels and specific risk control measures.
- liaise with or consult the appropriate agencies
- seek advice from an occupational hygienist
- follow the Code of practice on how to safely remove asbestos
- ensure that asbestos materials are disposed of at a facility licensed to accept asbestos materials, and where contractors have been engaged to dispose of asbestos waste, sight proof of appropriate disposal through weighbridge dockets or similar documentation
- update the asbestos register and notify workers of any newly identified asbestos locations.]

## The Government's Role in the Disposal of Asbestos Waste

### Transporting and Disposing of Asbestos Waste

The Ministry will ensure proper transport and dispose of waste in accordance with the relevant legislation and protocols.

### Operating Government Waste Management Facility / Facilities Licensed to Accept Asbestos Waste

[Ministry's that do not have waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste should delete this section. Ministries with waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste that they do not operate should note that the facilities are not operated by Ministry but include any relevant details. Ministries that operate waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste may tailor and include the text provided.]

Waste management facilities must be managed in accordance with the [Ministry to include Act name] which specifies that:

(a) Ministry to add details of facility management as it relates to ACMs

The Ministry **has / shall** develop a charging policy for receiving asbestos waste, which reflects the actual cost of managing the asbestos waste, plus any applicable levies.

When the waste receives construction, renovation, and demolition waste; workers shall visually screen and inspect incoming loads to minimise asbestos contamination risk as this waste may be high risk for ACMs. The Ministry **has / shall** develop procedures to avoid asbestos contamination in material intended for resource recovery.

The Ministry may issue a receipt for asbestos waste received at a licensed landfill facility. The receipt provided may note the time, date and location of disposal, weight of ACM disposed, method of disposal (note on handling) and a receipt number.

This information must be recorded by the facility, regardless of whether a receipt is issued. *[Ministry to note how receipts relate to any conditions of consent.]*

## Asbestos Waste Incorrectly Presented to the Government's Waste Facility / Facilities

*[Ministry's that do not have waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste should delete the text on packaging and re-packaging asbestos waste. Ministries with waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste that they do not operate should note that the facilities are not operated by Ministry but include any relevant details. Ministry's that operate waste facilities that are licensed to accept asbestos waste may tailor and include the text provided.]*

This section applies to situations where asbestos waste is taken to the Ministry's waste facility and the waste is:

- not correctly packaged for delivery and disposal
- not disclosed by the transporter as being asbestos or ACMs
- taken to a waste facility that does not accept asbestos waste.

In these situations, the Ministry may record relevant details such as the:

- contact details of the transporter
- origin of the asbestos or ACM
- amount and type of asbestos or ACM
- reasons why the asbestos waste was not properly packaged, disclosed, or transported to a waste facility licensed to receive asbestos waste
- development consent details (if applicable).

Where asbestos waste is not correctly packaged for delivery and disposal, or is not disclosed by the transporter as being asbestos or ACMs, the Ministry may:

- reject the asbestos waste from the facility
- suggest the transporter re-package the load correctly at the facility
- provide a bay for wetting and/or wrapping the asbestos and protective equipment for the transporter e.g., the option to purchase an asbestos waste handling kit (for non-commercial operators with less than 10 square metres of non-friable asbestos)
- question the transporter about the source of asbestos waste
- issue a clean-up notice or prevention notice under the *[Ministry to add legislation name]*
- issue a compliance cost notice under the *[Ministry to add legislation name]*
- issue a penalty infringement notice for improper transport of asbestos under *[Ministry to add legislation name]*

Where asbestos waste is taken to a waste facility that does not accept asbestos waste, the Ministry may reject the waste. Where waste is rejected, the Ministry should document the rejected load and inform the transporter of a waste facility to which the waste may be transported, that is, a waste facility at which the waste can be legally accepted. If the Ministry suspects that there is a risk of illegal dumping of the rejected waste, the Ministry will inform the appropriate compliance officers for action.

Suitable disposal for loads that are refused entry will remain the responsibility of the transporter and later the transporter will need to demonstrate to the Ministry that the waste has been appropriately disposed. Where asbestos waste is illegally dumped at an unstaffed waste station, management options for the Ministry include to:

- undertake surveillance via video cameras to issue fines or deter dumping
- provide targeted education to neighbouring landholders to ensure that they do not allow access to the waste station.

## **Recycling Facilities**

The government may screen and inspect incoming loads at recycling facilities for the presence of asbestos or ACMs to minimise asbestos contamination risk.

*[Ministry to insert reference to any Ministry procedures to avoid asbestos contamination in material intended for resource recovery or a note that Ministry may develop such procedures.]*



## Advice to Tenants and Prospective Buyers of Government Owned Property

The Ministry may provide advisory notes to tenants and prospective buyers of government owned property that is likely to contain asbestos.

The Ministry may request that tenants in government property:

- *advise the Ministry of any hazards relating to asbestos*
- *minimise damage to ACM*
- *co-operate with the Ministry in facilitating any risk management work arranged by the Ministry*
- *act on advice from the Ministry to minimise risks from asbestos.*

## Implementing the Ministry's Asbestos Policy

### Supporting Documents

The implementation of this policy is supported by the Ministry's: [Ministry to insert titles for any relevant publicly available documents, for example:

- conditions of consent
- guidelines for disposing of asbestos waste]

The Ministry also has several internal documents that support this policy. Ministry may wish to insert titles for any relevant documents which are not publicly available, for example:

- asbestos management plan
- asbestos register
- complaints handling procedures
- Ministry's existing risk assessment matrices and a risk controls checklist for asbestos
- employee health monitoring plans
- incident report form
- maintenance and inspection schedules for Ministry owned assets
- risk register
- safe work method statements/ procedures for asbestos handling and removal for Ministry employees
- site maps and GPS coordinates for asbestos in landfill
- site specific safety management plans
- training registers/ records (relevant to identifying, handling, and removing of asbestos materials)

Ministry may also wish to note any documents which Ministry intends to prepare to support this policy, for example:

- asbestos inquiries and complaints response flowchart and checklist
- asbestos management plan
- conditions of consent
- community education strategy

Ministry may also wish to note the month or year by which time Ministry aims to complete these documents.

## Communicating the Asbestos Policy

This is a publicly available policy. The policy is to be made available via:

- [The Ministry's **insert appropriate location: main administration building/s /head office /customer service centre /front counter**]
- The Ministry's website **[insert website address]**
- The Ministry's **[electronic record keeping system/intranet site insert name]**

All employees shall receive information about the policy at induction from **[insert job title of position responsible for employee inductions.]**

Any workers (including employees, contractors, consultants and, where relevant, volunteers and members of the public) who are involved in any activity or activities listed in [Appendix A](#) shall be provided with access to a copy of this policy and relevant supporting documents. This includes any workers involved in commencing, arranging, undertaking, regulating, inspecting, or supervising a potentially hazardous activity or activities. Managers are responsible for ensuring workers who report to them have access to the policy and appropriate information, documentation, and training in asbestos prior to planning the activity or activities.

The Ministry shall incorporate a statement regarding compliance with this policy in all relevant contracts and agreements with workers (including employees, contractors, consultants and, where relevant, volunteers and members of the public).

In the case of any substantive revisions to the policy, the revisions will be approved by the Ministry and the Ministry will notify all persons who may have cause to undertake, arrange or supervise any activities listed in [Appendix A](#).

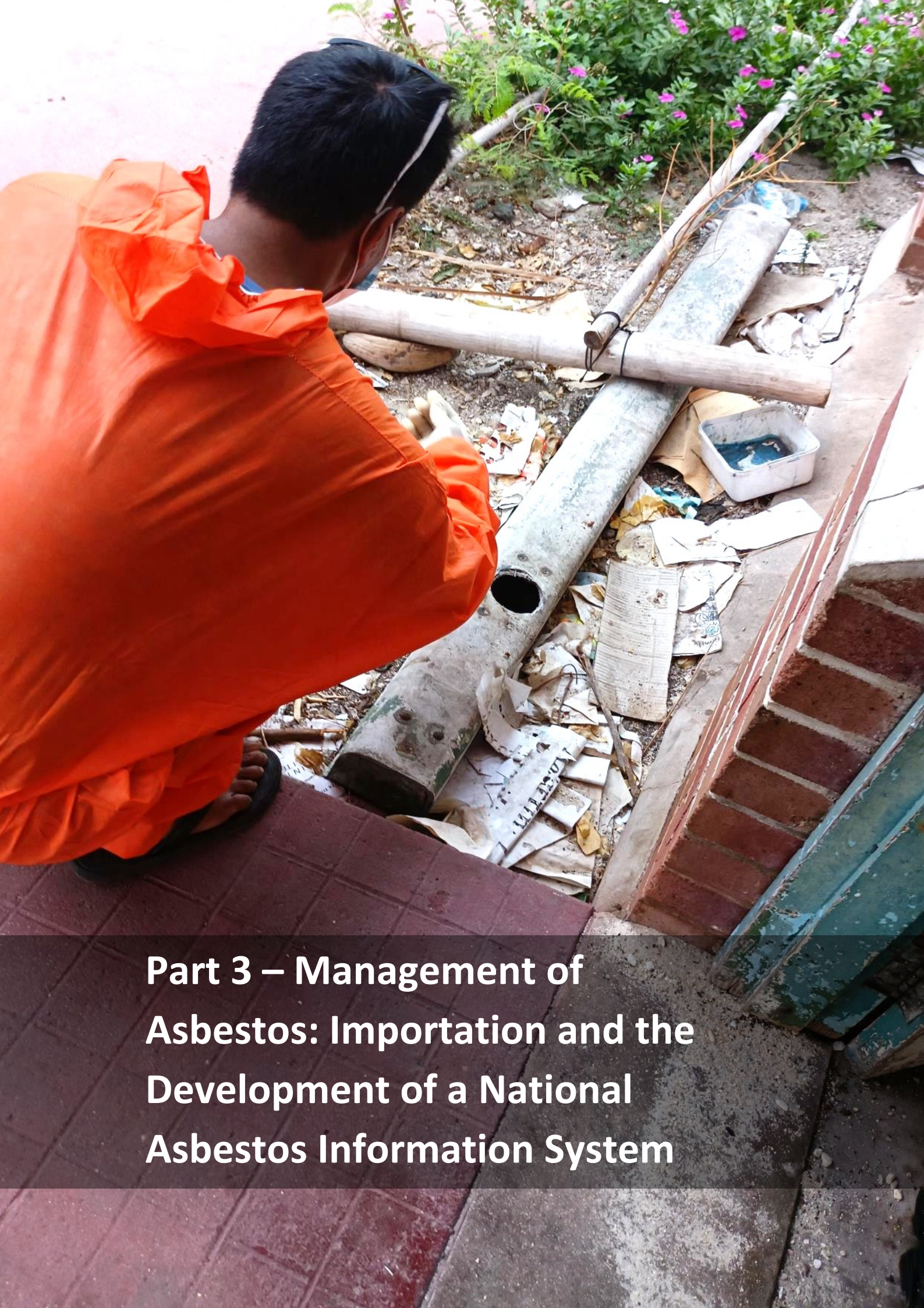
## Non-Compliance with the Policy

**Failure by workers to adhere to the policy and failure by managers to adequately inform relevant workers of this policy shall be considered non-compliance with this policy.**

**[If Ministry has adopted disciplinary procedures, Ministry may wish to include a note here that if employees fail to comply with the policy, Ministry's disciplinary procedures shall be followed. If Ministry does not have procedures Ministry may wish to include a note such as: The appropriate supervisor, manager, director, or the General Manager, shall act in the case on non-compliance with the policy and this may include providing education and training, issuing a verbal or written warning, altering the worker's duties, or in the case of serious breaches, terminating the worker's services. Each case shall be assessed on its merits with the aim of achieving a satisfactory outcome for all parties.]**

Workers should approach their supervisor or manager if they are experiencing difficulties in understanding or implementing the policy or if they are concerned that other workers are not complying with the policy.





**Part 3 – Management of  
Asbestos: Importation and the  
Development of a National  
Asbestos Information System**



## Asbestos and ACM importation

When carrying out management functions under the [add legislative reference], the Ministry must consider the possibility that imported products may contain asbestos and manage the potential risk to human health and the environment from those products.

1. Customs Officials shall not allow entry to imported goods unless they are satisfied that:
  - The goods are not asbestos, or ACMs that exceed the asbestos concentration stated in the Asbestos Management Code of Practice
  - Where asbestos, or ACMs are identified, the good shall be seized as a prohibited import and forfeited to customs officials [add appropriate Department/Ministry] for disposal
  - Shipments from overseas suppliers who have been identified as sending asbestos or goods containing asbestos into [add country name] will be targeted for intervention at the border. Goods that have previously been imported from these suppliers will be identified and referred for further investigation. Importers found attempting to bypass the asbestos border control by giving false or misleading information to a Customs Official, or their licensed customs broker, will also be targeted for intervention.
  - A person found unlawfully importing or exporting asbestos, or goods containing asbestos, may be subject to fines or prosecution un (Ministry to add details of legislation).
  - Asbestos, and goods containing asbestos, are prohibited imports, prohibited exports, and are prescribed as add legislation citation]. Customs and Quarantine [add appropriate Department/Ministry] shall consider the evidence available in deciding whether to prosecute an asbestos border offence.
  - When prosecution is not considered appropriate to the circumstances of the offence, the Ministry of Customs and Quarantine [add appropriate Department/Ministry] may also issue fines under the [add citation/regulation]

## Information management

The Government has an important role in supplying the community with information regarding asbestos and ACM management.

The development and maintenance of a National Asbestos Information System will assist the Ministry to meet its obligations. Whilst there is no legislative requirement for the Ministry to notify a property-owner when their property is identified to potentially contain asbestos or ACMs and included in the National Asbestos Information System, notifying the landowner provides the opportunity for them to establish that asbestos is not present, or alternatively, to manage or undertake asbestos removal activities.

Notifying the property owner of a site's inclusion also allows the owner the opportunity to reduce the potential risk of harm to the health of the land's occupants and to the environment.

Information held in the Asbestos Information System can also be provided to the public by access to documents on request.

1. The Ministry will develop and maintain a National Asbestos Information System to facilitate compliance with statutory obligations, support its planning functions, and provide relevant and accurate information on asbestos presence to the community in accordance with the *[include details of any legislative imperative to information disclosure]*
2. Where a property is included in the National Asbestos Information System, the local authority has the potential to restrict the development of the land to ensure the asbestos risk is appropriately managed. The local Authority will notify the property owner of the restriction in place whilst the asbestos risk is present.
3. Local Authorities will request that all asbestos assessment reports provided are exempt from any claim for copyright that may restrict the Authorities ability to provide information to the public on the location of asbestos exposure risks.

# Appendix A – General Information and Guidance

## What is asbestos?

Asbestos is the generic term for a number of naturally occurring, fibrous silicate materials. If asbestos is disturbed it can release dangerous fine particles of dust containing asbestos fibres. Breathing in dust containing elevated levels of asbestos fibres can cause asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

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).

Further information about the different types of asbestos can be found in: Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth), *Asbestos: A guide for householders and the general public*, Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, Canberra, 2013 (available at: [www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/asbestos-toc~asbestos-about](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/asbestos-toc~asbestos-about)).

Asbestos legacy materials still exist in many homes, buildings, and other assets. Where the material containing asbestos is in a non-friable form (or bonded), undisturbed, and painted or otherwise sealed, it may remain safely in place. However, where the ACM is broken, damaged or mishandled, fibres can become loose and airborne posing a risk to health. Disturbing or removing asbestos unsafely can create a health hazard.

It is often difficult to identify the presence of asbestos by sight. If you are in doubt, it is best to assume that you are dealing with asbestos and take every precaution. The most accurate way to find out whether a material contains asbestos is to obtain an asbestos inspection by a person competent in the identification and assessment of asbestos such as an occupational hygienist. It can be unsafe for an unqualified person to take a sample of asbestos. Licensed asbestos removalists can be found by using the telephone directory.

## Where is asbestos found?

Asbestos can be found where it occurs naturally and in a variety of materials in residential, commercial, and industrial premises and on public and private land.

### Residential premises

As a general rule, a house built:

- Before the mid-1980s – is highly likely to contain asbestos containing products.
- Between the mid-1980s and 1990 – is likely to contain asbestos containing products.
- After 1990 – is unlikely but possible to contain asbestos containing products.

Pipelines, particularly black surface coated and grey surface pipes, may contain asbestos.

It is important to note, the most accurate way to find out whether a material contains asbestos is by engaging a licensed asbestos removalist or occupational hygienist to inspect and arrange testing where necessary.

Fibre cement sheeting, commonly known as 'fibro', 'asbestos sheeting' or 'AC sheeting' (asbestos containing sheeting) is the most found legacy asbestos material in residential premises. Other ACMs were used in 'fibro' houses but also found in brick and timber housing stock from that period. Asbestos materials were sold under a range of commercial names. Some ACMs found in domestic settings are listed in [Appendix B](#).



Common places where asbestos is likely to be found in and around homes include:

#### **Outside**

- backyard garden sheds, carports, and garages
- electrical meter boards
- imitation brick cladding
- lining under eaves
- wall and roof materials (flat, patterned, or corrugated asbestos sheeting).

#### **Inside**

- insulation materials in heaters and stoves
- interior walls and sheeting
- sheet materials in wet areas (bathroom, toilet and laundry walls, ceilings, and floors)
- vinyl floor tiles, the backing to cushion vinyl flooring and underlay sheeting for ceramic tiles including kitchen splashback.

#### **Asbestos can also be found in:**

- angle mouldings (internal and external)
- board around windows and fireplaces
- brake pads and clutch pads to vehicles
- buried and dumped waste materials
- carpet underlay
- ceilings (ceiling tiles or sprayed coatings or loose in the ceiling cavity and may have moved to wall cavities, cornices, and sub-floor areas)
- cement flooring
- external toilets
- fencing
- guttering, downpipes, and vent pipes
- inside appliances e.g., irons, whitegoods
- gable ends
- outbuildings
- ridge capping
- swimming pools – reinforcing marble swimming pools
- ventilators – internal and external.

Other places asbestos can be found are listed in [Appendix B](#).

## Commercial and industrial premises

In commercial and industrial premises, asbestos may be found in the abovementioned places and:

- asbestos rope or fabric in expansion joints (for example exhaust flues) and insulation
- bituminous waterproof membrane on flat roofs
- brake disc pads and brake linings
- cloth, tapes, ropes, and gaskets for packing
- electrical switchboards and duct heater units
- fillers and filters
- fire doors
- lagging on pipes such as heater flues
- lift motor rooms
- pipes, casing for water and electrical/ telecommunication services
- rubber, plastics, thermosetting resins, adhesives, paints, coatings, caulking compounds and sealants for thermal, electrical and insulation applications
- structural beams of buildings
- yarns and textiles e.g., fire blankets.

## Sites contaminated with asbestos

Contamination of soils from asbestos or ACMs can present a risk in urban and rural environments if the asbestos can give rise to elevated levels of airborne fibres that people can breathe. Whilst buried material may not give rise to airborne asbestos fibres if securely contained, inappropriate disturbance of this waste could give rise to harmful levels of asbestos fibres in air. Some activities have the potential to encounter and disturb asbestos waste or contamination, particularly where the contamination is not known to be present at the site or has not been appropriately considered.

## Situations where asbestos contamination may occur

Situations where asbestos contamination may occur include:

- industrial land, e.g., asbestos-cement manufacturing facilities, former power stations, and rail and shipyards, especially workshops and depots
- waste disposal or dumping sites, including sites of illegal dumping e.g., building waste
- sites with infill or burial of asbestos waste from former asbestos mining or manufacture processes
- buildings or structures damaged by fire or storm
- land with fill or foundation material of unknown composition
- sites where buildings or structures have been constructed from ACM or where asbestos may have been used as insulation material, e.g., asbestos roofing, sheds, garages, reservoir roofs, water tanks, boilers and demolition waste has been buried onsite
- sites where buildings or structures have been improperly demolished or renovated, or where relevant documentation is lacking
- disused services with asbestos containing piping such as water pipes (including sewage systems, water services and irrigation systems), underground electrical and telephone wires and telecommunications trenches or pits (usually within 1 metre of the surface).

## Potentially hazardous activities

Several activities could cause asbestos to be inadvertently disturbed and consequently create a health risk. Before undertaking any of the activities listed below, it should be considered whether ACMs may be present. If asbestos is present, these activities may be illegal or certain precautions may be required, or an appropriately licensed person may be required to undertake the activity.

Members of the public could inadvertently disturb asbestos through activities including:

- renovations, refurbishments, or repairs particularly those involving power tools, boring, breaking, cutting, drilling, grinding, sanding, or smashing ACMs
- sealing, painting, brushing, and cleaning asbestos cement products
- demolitions of homes or other structures (dismantling or destruction)
- relocating a house, building or structure
- using compressed air on ACMs
- water blasting ACMs
- cleaning gutters on asbestos cement roofs
- handling asbestos cement conduits or boxes
- maintenance work such as plumbing and electrical work on or adjacent to ACMs such as working on electrical mounting boards
- maintenance or servicing of materials from vehicles, plant, or equipment
- checking, removing, or replacing ceiling insulation which contains asbestos.

Ministry could inadvertently disturb asbestos through activities such as:

- abovementioned activities
- asset and building maintenance
- certifying
- inspections of sites and premises
- transport and disposal of illegally dumped materials
- collection, transport, and disposal of incorrectly disposed of materials.

Naturally occurring asbestos and contaminated sites could be inadvertently disturbed during:

- road building
- site and construction work
- other excavation activities
- vehicle movements.

Natural processes can create a risk of exposure to asbestos including:

- extensive fire or storm damage to asbestos cement roofs or building materials
- extensive weathering and etching of unsealed asbestos cement roofs.

In addition, work that intentionally disturbs asbestos, such as sampling or removal, should be conducted by a competent person and in accordance with the relevant codes of practice and legislation.

## Health Hazards

Asbestos fibres can pose a risk to health if airborne, as inhalation is the main way that asbestos enters the body. The World Health Organisation has stated that concentrations of asbestos in drinking water from asbestos cement pipes do not present a hazard to human health.

Breathing in asbestos fibres can cause asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. The risk of contracting these diseases increases with the number of fibres inhaled and the risk of lung cancer from inhaling asbestos fibres is greatly increased if you smoke. Small fibres are the most dangerous and they are invisible to the naked eye. People who are at most risk are those who have been exposed to high levels of asbestos for a long time. The symptoms of these diseases do not usually appear for some time (about 20 to 30 years) after the first exposure to asbestos.

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

**Lung cancer** can be caused by asbestos. 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 the peritoneum (the lining of the abdominal cavity). Mesothelioma rarely occurs less than 15 years from first exposure, and most cases occur over 30 years after first exposure. Accordingly, the rates of malignant mesothelioma (an incurable cancer) are expected to rise from the year 2012 to 2020 and are expected to peak in this time.

If asbestos fibres are in a stable material, for example bonded in asbestos-cement sheeting (such as fibro), and these materials are in good condition they pose little health risk. However, where fibro or other non-friable asbestos sheeting is broken, damaged or mishandled, fibres can become loose and airborne posing a risk to health. Disturbing or removing ACMs unsafely can create a hazard.

When someone has potentially been exposed to asbestos or receives or expects they may receive a diagnosis of an asbestos-related disease, they may experience psychological distress, including anxiety and may need support. Their family and those around them may also be vulnerable to psychological distress.

## Appendix B – Asbestos Containing Materials found in Domestic Settings

A non-exhaustive list of some ACMs found in residential and commercial settings

Asbestos containing materials	Approximate supply dates
<b>Cement sheets</b>	Imported goods supplied from 1903 locally made 'fribrolite' from 1917
<b>Cement roofing / lining slates</b>	Imported goods supplied from 1903 locally made 'fribrolite' from 1917
<b>Mouldings and cover strips</b>	Available by 1920s and 1930s
<b>Super-six (corrugated) roofing</b>	Available by 1920s and 1930s – 1985
<b>'Tilex' decorative wall panels</b>	Available by 1920s and 1930s
<b>Pipes and conduit piping</b>	Available by 1920s and 1930s
<b>Motor vehicle brake linings</b>	Available by 1920s and 1930s
<b>Striated sheeting</b>	Available from 1957
<b>'Asbestolux' insulation boards</b>	Available from 1957
<b>'Shadowline' asbestos sheeting for external walls, gable ends and fences</b>	Available from 1958 – 1985
<b>Vinyl floor tiles impregnated with asbestos</b>	Available up until 1960s
<b>Asbestos containing paper backing for linoleum</b>	Available up until 1960s
<b>'Durasbestos' asbestos cement products</b>	Available up until 1960s
<b>'Tilex' marblitone decorative wall panels</b>	Available from early 1960s
<b>'Tilex' weave pattern decorative wall panels</b>	Available from early 1960s
<b>'Hardiflex' sheeting</b>	Available from 1960s – 1981
<b>'Versilux' building board</b>	Available from 1960s – 1982
<b>'Hardiplank' and 'Hardigrain' woodgrain sheeting</b>	Available from mid 1970s – 1981
<b>Loose-fill, fluffy asbestos ceiling insulation</b>	During the 1960s and 1970s, pure loose-fill asbestos was sold as ceiling insulation for residential and commercial premises. A Canberra based company known as 'Mr Fluffy' installed insulation in at least 1,000 homes in the ACT and is also understood to have installed insulation into homes in NSW.
<b>Asbestos rope gaskets for wood heaters. Heater and stove insulation</b>	Dates of supply availability unknown but prior to 31 December 2003
<b>Compressed fibro-cement sheets</b>	Available from 1960s – 1984
<b>Villaboard</b>	Available until 1981
<b>Harditherm</b>	Available until 1984
<b>Highline</b>	Available until 1985
<b>Coverline</b>	Available until 1985
<b>Roofing accessories</b>	Available until 1985
<b>Pressure pipe</b>	Available until 1987

### Sources:

NSW Government, 2011, *Asbestos Blueprint: A guide to roles and responsibilities for operational staff of state and local government*. NSW Taskforce Report: *Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation in NSW Homes (2015)*

[www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/biz\\_res/ftweb/pdfs/Tenants\\_and\\_home\\_owners/Loose\\_Fill\\_Abestos\\_Taskforce\\_Report.pdf](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/biz_res/ftweb/pdfs/Tenants_and_home_owners/Loose_Fill_Abestos_Taskforce_Report.pdf) (accessed October, 2015).

## Asbestos containing materials that may be found in various settings (*non-exhaustive list*)

Asbestos containing materials
<b>A</b>
Air conditioning duct, in the exterior or interior acoustic and thermal insulation
Arc shields in lift motor rooms or large electrical cabinets
Asbestos-based plastics products as electrical insulates and acid resistant compositions or aircraft seats
Asbestos ceiling tiles
Asbestos cement conduit
Asbestos cement electrical fuse boards
Asbestos cement external roofs and walls
Asbestos cement in the use of form work for pouring concrete
Asbestos cement internal flues and downpipes
Asbestos cement moulded products such as gutters, ridge capping, gas meter covers, cable troughs and covers
Asbestos cement pieces for packing spaces between floor joists and piers
Asbestos cement (underground) pit as used for traffic control wiring, telecommunications cabling etc
Asbestos cement render, plaster, mortar and coursework
Asbestos cement sheet
Asbestos cement sheet behind ceramic tiles
Asbestos cement sheet over exhaust canopies such as ovens and fume cupboards
Asbestos cement sheet internal walls and ceilings
Asbestos cement sheet underlay for vinyl
Asbestos cement storm drainpipes
Asbestos cement water pipes (usually underground)
Asbestos containing laminates, (such as Formica) used where heat resistance is required
Asbestos containing pegboard
Asbestos felts
Asbestos marine board, e.g., Marinat
Asbestos mattresses used for covering hot equipment in power stations
Asbestos paper used variously for insulation, filtering, and production of fire-resistant laminates
Asbestos roof tiles
Asbestos textiles
Asbestos textile gussets in air conditioning ducting systems
Asbestos yarn
Autoclave/steriliser insulation
<b>B</b>
Bitumen-based water proofing such as Malthoid (roofs and floors, also in brickwork)
Bituminous adhesives and sealants
Boiler gaskets
Boiler insulation, slabs, and wet mix



<b>Asbestos containing materials</b>
Brake disc pads
Brake linings
<b>C</b>
Cable penetration insulation bags (typically Telecom)
Calorifier insulation
Car body filters (uncommon)
Caulking compounds, sealant, and adhesives
Ceiling insulation (which may have moved into wall cavities, cornices, and sub-floor areas)
Cement render
Chrysotile wicks in kerosene heaters
Clutch faces
Compressed asbestos cement panels for flooring, typically verandas, bathrooms, and steps for demountable buildings
Compressed asbestos fibres (CAF) used in brakes and gaskets for plant and automobiles
<b>D</b>
Door seals on ovens
<b>E</b>
Electric heat banks – block insulation
Electric hot water services (normally no asbestos, but some millboard could be present)
Electric light fittings, high wattage, insulation around fitting (and bituminised)
Electrical switchboards see Pitch-based
Exhaust equipment on vehicles
<b>F</b>
Filler in acetylene gas cylinders
Filters: beverage wine filtration
Fire blankets
Fire curtains
Fire door insulation
Fire-rated wall rendering containing asbestos with mortar
Fire-resistant plaster board, typically on ships
Fire-retardant material on steel work supporting reactors on columns in refineries in the chemical industry
Flexible hoses
Floor vinyl sheets
Floor vinyl tiles
Fuse blankets and ceramic fuses in switchboards
<b>G</b>
Galbestos™ roofing materials (decorative coating on metal roof for sound proofing)
Gaskets: chemicals, refineries
Gaskets: general
Gauze mats in laboratories/chemical refineries
Gloves: asbestos
<b>H</b>
Hairdryers: insulation around heating elements
Header (manifold) insulation
<b>I</b>
Insulation blocks
Insulation in ceilings, which may have spread to wall cavities, cornices, and sub-floor areas
Insulation in electric reheat units for air conditioner systems
<b>L</b>
Laboratory bench tops

<b>Asbestos containing materials</b>
Laboratory fume cupboard panels
Laboratory ovens: wall insulation
Lagged exhaust pipes on emergency power generators
Lagging in penetrations in fireproof walls
Lift shafts: asbestos cement panels lining the shaft at the opening of each floor and asbestos packing around penetrations
Limpet asbestos spray insulation
Locomotives: steam, lagging on boilers, steam lines, steam dome and gaskets
<b>M</b>
Mastik
Millboard between heating unit and wall
Millboard lining of switchboxes
Mortar
<b>P</b>
Packing materials for gauges, valves, etc can be square packing, rope or loose fibre
Packing material on window anchorage points in high-rise buildings
Paint, typically industrial epoxy paints
Penetrations through concrete slabs in high rise buildings
Pipe insulation including moulded sections, water-mix type, rope braid and sheet
Plaster and plaster cornice adhesives
Pipe insulation: moulded sections, water-mix type, rope braid and sheet
Pitch-based (Zelemite, Ausbestos, Lebah) electrical switchboard
<b>R</b>
Refractory linings
Refractory tiles
Rubber articles: extent of usage unknown
<b>S</b>
Sealant between floor slab and wall, usually in boiler rooms, risers or lift shafts
Sealant or Mastik on windows
Sealants and Mastik in air conditioning ducting joints
Spackle or plasterboard wall jointing compounds
Sprayed insulation: acoustic wall and ceiling
Sprayed insulation: beams and ceiling slabs
Sprayed insulation: fire retardant sprayed on nut internally, for bolts holding external building wall panels
Stoves: old domestic type, wall insulation
Sealant between floor slab and wall, usually in boiler rooms, risers or lift shafts
<b>T</b>
Tape and rope: lagging and jointing
Tapered ends of pipe lagging, where lagging is not necessarily asbestos
Tilux sheeting in place of ceramic tiles in bathrooms
Trailing cable under lift cabins
Trains: country – guards vans – millboard between heater and wall
Trains – Harris cars – sprayed asbestos between steel shell and Laminex
<b>V</b>
Valve and pump insulation
<b>W:</b>
Welding rods
Woven asbestos cable sheath

*Sources:*

*Environmental health notes number 2 guidelines for local government on asbestos*, 2005 (Victorian Department of Human Services).  
[www.health.vic.gov.au/environment/downloads/hs523\\_notes2\\_web.pdf](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/environment/downloads/hs523_notes2_web.pdf) NSW Taskforce Report: *Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation in NSW Homes* (2015) [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/biz\\_res/ftweb/pdfs/Tenants\\_and\\_home\\_owners/Loose\\_Fill\\_Abestos\\_Taskforce\\_Report.pdf](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/biz_res/ftweb/pdfs/Tenants_and_home_owners/Loose_Fill_Abestos_Taskforce_Report.pdf) (accessed October, 2015).

## Appendix C – PacWastePlus ACM Policy Series Publications

A suite of tools and resources have been developed by PacWastePlus for use by members to appropriately manage asbestos and asbestos containing materials.

### **Asbestos Management Legislative and Regulatory Analysis – Policy Recommendations:**

This report was developed to assist PacWastePlus participating countries to implement policy instruments that address the management of asbestos and asbestos containing materials (ACMs). This report is the initial output of an assistance package of support for PacWastePlus countries to manage the importation of ACMs at a national level.

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/asbestos-management-legislative-and-regulatory-analysis-policy-recommendations/>

### **Asbestos Management Policy and Regulations for Pacific Island Countries and Timor-Leste**

This document is designed to assist PacWastePlus participating countries to implement legislative instruments that ban the importation of asbestos and asbestos containing materials (ACMs). This document provides:

- Introductory information on asbestos, its impacts on human health, and current management asbestos management practices
- Information on the regulatory, and non-regulatory activities that can be implemented to reduce exposure risk from asbestos and ACM
  - Justification for executing an ACM ban both through policy and regulation.

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/asbestos-management-policy-and-regulation-for-pacific-island-countries-and-timor-leste/>

### **Asbestos Management Legislative Reform Pathway**

The Asbestos Management Legislative Reform Pathway clearly identifies the steps necessary to institute bans on asbestos. This Pathway utilises and summaries the various work undertaken such as an analysis of legislative options for the management of asbestos, development of a guidance note/brief on the issues, and a Policy Note to guide the drafting of National legislation to impose a ban on the importation of asbestos. The development of these resources is in direct response to the outcomes of previous SPREP Meetings requesting specific assistance to manage asbestos and ban its importation to the region.

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/asbestos-management-legislative-reform-pathway/>

### **Asbestos Contaminated Materials Guide for Disaster Debris Removal**

This document is designed to provide guidance on response and management of asbestos containing materials during disaster debris removal operations. It supplements the knowledge and skills of appropriately trained asbestos abatement employed personnel, that are employing necessary protective measures to handle asbestos containing materials.

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/asbestos-contaminated-materials-guide-for-disaster-debris-removal/>

## **Living Safely with Asbestos**

Asbestos is a known health hazard and may be present in your home, but it may not be a risk, depending on its condition. In this publication, we provide useful information on how to live safely with legacy asbestos.

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/living-safely-with-asbestos/>

## **Personal Protective Equipment: Guidance for Waste Management Workers in Pacific Island Countries**

The information presented in this publication summarises international best practices for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

To appropriately manage waste, workers will encounter many materials that could be hazardous to their health, as such, a variety of PPE has been designed to provide the necessary protection for them and their co-workers. The more potentially hazardous the material, the greater the need for PPE.

PPE is the 'last line of defence' and should be used in conjunction with stringent work procedures and controls that limit exposure to hazardous substances. It is likely that workers will come into contact with hazardous substances during their use, transport, or disposal, as such the implementation of controls, procedures and the use of PPE are required to protect workers from any health and safety impacts

<https://pacwasteplus.org/resources/personal-protective-equipment-guidance-for-waste-management-workers-in-pacific-island-countries/>

ISBN 978-982-04-1129-6



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