

INFORMATION SHEET 6

RESTRICTED AND NOTIFIABLE WORK INVOLVING ASBESTOS

WorkSafe NZ must be notified of restricted work involving asbestos at least 24 hours before the work begins.

WHAT IS RESTRICTED WORK?

Restricted work¹ involving asbestos is defined as:

- a. work involving asbestos, if the asbestos is friable and is or has been used in connection with thermal or acoustic insulation, or fire protection in buildings, ships, structures or vehicles
- b. work involving asbestos, if the asbestos is friable and is or has been used in connection with lagging around boilers, ducts, furnaces or pipes
- c. the demolition or maintenance of any thing, including a building or part of a building containing friable asbestos
- d. the encapsulation of materials containing friable asbestos
- e. the use, on asbestos cement or any other bonded product containing asbestos, of
 - a power tool with any kind of cutting blade or abrasive device, except when it is used with dust control equipment (see note), or
 - any other equipment whose use may result in the release of asbestos dust, except when it is used with dust control equipment
- f. dry sanding of floor coverings containing asbestos.

¹ From the *Health and Safety in Employment (Asbestos) Regulations 1998*.

Note: Part e) means that when a power tool or other equipment is fitted with a means of dust control² and used to cut or work on asbestos-cement, the work is **not** classified as restricted.

WHAT IS FRIABLE ASBESTOS?

Friable asbestos is asbestos that under ordinary conditions can be easily crumbled.

Note: 'Ordinary conditions' implies 'as it is in situ' but this definition has not been legally tested. The 'ordinary condition' of the asbestos can change, eg due to age, weathering, fire damage, abrasion, chemical treatment, waterblasting or algae damage.



Asbestos has become friable by being:

(a) exposed to fire



(b) damaged

² **Dust control equipment** means equipment that, when used in a satisfactory working order, suppresses the release of asbestos fibres into the air by any means, including the conveying of water or any other wetting agent to the asbestos that would otherwise generate asbestos dust. (Health and Safety in Employment Regulations 1998).

WHAT IS NOTIFIABLE WORK IN RELATION TO ASBESTOS?

Notifiable work in relation to asbestos is “restricted work” as defined at the start of this factsheet.

All restricted work must be notified to WorkSafe NZ at least 24 hours before the work begins. Evidence of the notification must be kept on site.

Notification can be made by:

- > completing the ‘particular hazardous works’ form online at www.worksafe.govt.nz
- > by downloading and completing the notification form and
 - posting to:
The Registrar
WorkSafe New Zealand
PO Box 105146
Auckland
 - emailing to: healthsafety.notification@worksafe.govt.nz
 - faxing to: (09) 984 4115

WHO MAY CARRY OUT RESTRICTED WORK?

The only people who may do restricted work with asbestos are:

- > a person holding a certificate of competence
- > a person directly supervised by someone holding a certificate of competence.

A certificate of competence means that the holder of the certificate has a thorough knowledge of the hazards and work practices required to carry out restricted work involving asbestos.

Specific medical monitoring is required for workers undertaking restricted work. This should be done by medical practitioners specialising in occupational or respiratory medicine.

Workers should be monitored before working with asbestos and at least every two years afterward.

WHAT IS REQUIRED WHEN CARRYING OUT ASBESTOS-RELATED RESTRICTED WORK?

If asbestos work is restricted, the area containing the asbestos must be isolated so that asbestos fibres cannot be released from the contaminated area to any other area. This is complex work requiring specialist equipment and processes including:

- > enclosing the area containing the asbestos
- > installing a decontamination unit
- > installing a negative air unit
- > carrying out air monitoring
- > wearing full PPE (personal protective equipment) including a positive-pressure respirator (see our factsheet on the PPE to use when working with asbestos).

For more information refer to the New Zealand Guidelines for the Management and Removal of Asbestos (New Zealand Demolition and Asbestos Association: March 2011).



Create an enclosure before removing a textured ceiling containing asbestos.



Air must be monitored for asbestos levels outside the enclosure



Warning signs must be put up at site entry and all entries into the building



A negative pressure unit must be installed to remove air from within the enclosure