

<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Asbestos Policy</b>
<b>Section Responsible:</b>	<b>Environment and Planning</b>
<b>Minute No:</b>	<b>2335</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>30th June, 2012</b>

### **Purpose**

This policy has been developed to address the potentially serious health hazard posed during the demolition or removal of asbestos material. The policy applies to all developments and renovations involving asbestos via the implementation of conditions of development consent and enforcement where necessary within the Greater Hume Shire Council area.

The policy aims to protect the health and safety of the community and site workers when carrying out demolition and building works involving asbestos prior to the commencement of any development works and compliance with WorkCover requirements. In addition, this policy aims to ensure that removal of all asbestos is done correctly to prevent contamination of land and costly remediation works.

### **Objectives**

- a) To minimise and control the risk of generating airborne asbestos fibre.
- b) To minimise and control the risk of exposure to airborne asbestos fibre.

# Asbestos Policy

## Definitions

**Asbestos** – means the fibrous form of the mineral silicates that belong to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock-forming minerals, including actinolite, amosite (brown asbestos), anthophyllite, chrysolite (white asbestos), crocidolite (blue asbestos) and tremolite.

**Asbestos work** – means work undertaken in connection with a construction or demolition work process in which exposure to asbestos may occur and includes any work process involving the use, application, removal, mixing, or other handling of asbestos or asbestos containing material.

**Bonded asbestos** – any material containing asbestos in a bonded matrix. It may consist of Portland cement or various resin/binders and it can not be crushed by hand.

**Friable asbestos** – any material containing asbestos which is in the form of a powder, or can be crushed by hand when dry.

## Overview

Asbestos can be found in many buildings that were constructed prior to the mid 1980s, its uses were many and varied and included, however not limited to:

- Corrugated roofing;
- Wall cladding (internal and external);
- Guttering;
- Downpipes;
- Thermal insulation;
- Electricity and gas meter boxes;
- Vinyl: asbestos floor tiles;
- Asbestos insulated wiring; and
- Fibro sheet fencing.

The existence of asbestos (which can also be referred to as fibro) does not present a danger if it is in good condition. It becomes hazardous when disturbed during demolition, renovation or mishap, as the fibres may be released into the air and remain suspended for a considerable amount of time allowing for their inhalation. These fibres can then remain in the body for years before causing disease such as asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

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Although some materials are clearly labelled as containing asbestos, not all are. Materials that are suspected of containing asbestos should be inspected and tested by suitably qualified and experienced people before they are disturbed. It is not possible to establish if a material contains asbestos by simply looking at it. Doubtful material should be treated as containing asbestos.

## **Procedures**

Any demolition work, including asbestos removal, requires a Development Application (DA) to be submitted and approved by the Greater Hume Shire Council before demolition commences. After a suitably qualified person has identified asbestos, the following relevant information should be ensured:

### **WORKING WITH BONDED ASBESTOS MATERIAL**

A bonded asbestos license is required in NSW to remove more than 10m<sup>2</sup> of bonded asbestos material. A licensed bonded asbestos removalist can remove any amount of bonded asbestos material. Licensing for asbestos removalists is regulated and administered by WorkCover NSW.

The two types of asbestos licenses are designated AS1 and AS2 licenses.

- AS1 licenses the operator to carry out work with friable and bonded asbestos.
- AS2 licenses the operator to carry out work with bonded asbestos only.

For the removal, disturbance or any work with asbestos material less than 10m<sup>2</sup> in area safe work practices should be implemented in accordance with WorkCover.

### **WORKING WITH FRIABLE ASBESTOS MATERIAL**

Only licensed asbestos removal contractors can remove friable asbestos. A permit must be obtained from WorkCover before commencing any work involving friable asbestos. The removal of any friable asbestos can only be carried out by contractors holding the appropriate licence from WorkCover NSW.

### **WATER BLASTING**

It is illegal to water-blast asbestos containing materials because there is a high risk of asbestos fibres being released into the atmosphere and inhaled.

### **DWELLING RELOCATION**

Although buildings clad in bonded asbestos material are considered to be *in situ*, it is recommended that all bonded asbestos be removed from the building before it is relocated. Moving buildings clad with asbestos cement can cause the material to become loose and fall off, causing a hazard in transit or when the building is re-constructed. This could result in expensive clean-up costs. Any bonded asbestos material that is removed cannot be reused. Weathered asbestos roofing and gutters should be cleaned and removed prior to relocation.

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The Greater Hume Shire Council utilises the following conditions in regards to the relocation of dwellings:

- A report prepared by a suitably qualified person, identifying the location and type of asbestos internal and external of the proposed dwelling to be relocated.

**Note:** Where asbestos has been identified, it will be required to be removed prior to relocation of the dwelling. In this regard please advise Council of the proposed replacement materials for all external work.

- All asbestos and derivatives of asbestos cement must be removed prior to the buildings placement in the Greater Hume Shire Council area

## **CLADDING**

Over cladding of bonded asbestos material should not be undertaken unless it can be carried out without causing damage to the bonded asbestos. Over-cladding may result in more hazardous and expensive removal at a later date. All buildings with existing cladding over bonded asbestos should be labelled appropriately, somewhere on the building, to highlight to trades people and occupiers that the building contains bonded asbestos material.

## **COMPLYING DEVELOPMENT:**

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 as amended on the 18th December 2009 stipulates that all demolition work must comply with Australian Standard AS 2601 - *The demolition of structures* to make provision for the safe removal of asbestos by licensed contractors in cases where complying development is being undertaken by owner-builders: consistent with the requirements that protect workplaces and employees.

## **Responsibilities And Authorities**

### **COUNCIL:**

The Greater Hume Shire Council has the responsibility to -

- Ensure prospective applicants, who have identified asbestos materials as part of their proposed work, are aware of the controls, licensing requirements and regulations regarding the removal or disturbance of the acknowledged asbestos.
- Ensure relevant documentation is available and supplied to all personnel involved with asbestos removal
- Ensure that a suitably qualified person has conducted any asbestos inspections or identifications.

# Asbestos Policy

## APPLICANTS:

- Follow all requirements within this policy and the relevant regulations
- Ensure that safety equipment is utilised and working in the proper manner during all approved works.

## Awareness of the Following Acts

1. Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000
2. Occupational Health & Safety (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2001
3. Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
4. Contaminated Land Management Act 1997

## Additional Resources

WorkCover provides extensive guidelines for dealing with asbestos. The WorkCover catalogue titled 'Working with asbestos Guide' provides up to date guidance on identification, licensing and working with asbestos. The catalogue can be found on the WorkCover web site at:

<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

## Variation

Council reserves the right to vary or revoke this policy.

### POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL

Asbestos Policy	First adopted	23 Jun 10 Min 2335
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