



SAFETY WARNING

Read the safety warnings on the ladder and follow the manufacturer's advice.

Never use a ladder if you are alone and cannot get assistance if you have an accident.

If you are a senior citizen or a person with a disability you may be eligible for assistance with home maintenance from either your council or local agencies.

Caution

- Don't take risks by taking a short cut.
- Never lean a ladder on an unstable or slippery surface.
- Do not 'walk' the ladder while still on it, climb down and reposition the ladder closer to the work.
- Do not push or pull against other objects when up the ladder unless the ladder is properly secured—these forces can destabilise the ladder.
- Do not use a ladder if you are working in wind or rain.
- Do not use a ladder if you are affected by medication or if you have a medical condition that can cause you to lose your balance.
- Never have more than one person on the ladder at a time.

Remember

- Work within arm's reach from the ladder and never lean out too far.
- Only climb as far as the second step from the top of a step ladder or the third step from the top of a straight ladder.
- Place the ladder on dry, firm and level ground.



Australian
Competition &
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Commission

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SAFETY ALERT USING A LADDER



STAY SAFE

DEATH AND INJURY RISK WORKING ON A LADDER

You don't have to fall far off a ladder to be seriously injured: 1–2 metres can be enough. Fractured limbs, spinal cord damage, severe brain injury or even death can result.

At least 83 Australians, mainly men, have died after falling from a ladder over the past five years. Thousands more have been seriously injured while using a ladder for home repairs and renovations, as well as gardening tasks.

Men at or nearing retirement age are in the highest risk category for this type of accident.

Protect yourself—follow the safety guidelines in this brochure.



Do not carry items weighing more than 5 kilograms up or down the ladder; have someone pass them to you.

PLAN TO STAY SAFE

SAFETY GUIDELINES WHEN USING A LADDER

CHECK THE LADDER BEFORE USE

- ✓ The ladder is in good condition without signs of warping, rust, corrosion or missing rivets.
- ✓ No loose or cracked rungs or hinges.
- ✓ Non-slip safety feet are fitted and in good condition.
- ✓ The ladder's height is right for the job—if using an extension ladder to access a roof or work area, the top of the ladder should extend at least one metre over the top of the surface it is resting on.

SET UP

- ✓ Place the ladder on dry, firm and level ground—if the soil is too soft, place a hard board under the ladder's feet to stop it sinking.
- ✓ Engage all locks and braces—step ladders should be fully opened.
- ✓ Keep the ladder clear of powerlines and exposed electrical wiring.
- ✓ The foot of an extension ladder should be placed at a distance from the wall equal to ¼ of the length of the ladder.



Place a ladder on dry, firm and level ground

CLIMB SAFELY

- ✓ Wear well fitting, enclosed, slip-resistant footwear—not sandals or thongs.
- ✓ Have someone hold the ladder at the base while you are using it.
- ✓ Hold the ladder with both hands as you climb and carry tools in a tool belt.
- ✓ Stay in the centre of the ladder as you climb.
- ✓ Only climb to the second rung from the top of a step ladder or the third rung from the top of an extension ladder.
- ✓ Secure the top of an extension ladder into position before starting work.

WORK SAFELY

- ✓ Work within arm's reach from the ladder—if you cannot easily reach, climb down and reposition the ladder.
- ✓ Always hold the ladder with one hand.
- ✓ Be careful when pulling items from shelves/gutters/roofs as this may cause you to lose your balance.

When you are finished store the ladder in a dry place to prevent warping or corrosion.

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Play it safe with asbestos: tips for property managers

If any of the properties you manage were built before 1990, it is likely that they will contain asbestos. This information will help you to take the right steps when a rental property needs repair or renovation work. Protect yourself, your workers, tenants and the property's neighbours by following these simple tips whenever you contract tradespeople for work.

This fact sheet will help you to identify if asbestos is an element of risk in a property's repair or renovation.

The law prohibits certain activities on asbestos containing materials and also requires certain actions when working around or on asbestos containing materials. There are serious penalties for non-compliance - fines can be issued and prosecution may occur.

Incorrect removal of asbestos materials can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to clean up. This can include the removal, disposal and replacement of anything that comes into contact with asbestos fibres e.g. soil, plants, toys, clothing and soft furnishings.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral made up of strong fibres that have fire, heat and chemical resistant properties. Asbestos fibres are 50-200 times thinner than a human hair, can float in the air for a long time, are invisible to the naked eye, and can be breathed into the lungs.

Why is asbestos dangerous?

Asbestos can pose a risk if fibres become airborne, are inhaled and reach deep into the lungs in sufficient quantities. These fibres are a major health hazard and can cause serious asbestos-related diseases that can take decades to become apparent.

Breathing in asbestos fibres has been linked to three respiratory diseases:

- asbestosis (progressive and irreversible scarring of lung tissue that impairs breathing)
- lung cancer
- mesothelioma (a cancer of the linings around the lungs and abdomen).

Non-friable (bonded) asbestos materials (e.g. fibro) that are in good condition (i.e. undamaged) do not pose a health risk if left undisturbed.

How do I know if the property I manage contains asbestos?

It is often very difficult to identify the presence of asbestos by sight. While asbestos is now banned from use, it was a component of thousands of different products and building materials used in the community and industry from the 1940s until the late 1980s.

As a general rule, if a house was built:

- before the mid 1980s, it is **highly likely** that it would have some materials containing asbestos
- between the mid 1980s and 1990, it is **likely** that it would have materials containing asbestos
- after 1990, it is **highly unlikely** it would have materials containing asbestos.

The only way to be certain is to have a sample of the material analysed. Take a sample of anything you suspect may contain asbestos to an accredited laboratory for analysis by a competent person.

Where is asbestos commonly found in houses?

Asbestos materials used in houses are normally bonded with other materials and are commonly referred to as fibro, asbestos cement, or AC sheeting. Common products/trade names include *hardiplank*, *super six roof sheeting*, *millboard*, *asbestos insulating board*, and *asbestolux*. Loose friable 'unbonded' asbestos is sometimes found in



lagging or as a backing material to vinyl sheet flooring.

To see the many common locations of materials containing asbestos in houses, download the free poster from the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website or refer to 'Asbestos: A home renovator's and tradesperson's guide for minor work in domestic buildings.'

Tips to manage asbestos risks

There are a range of things you can do to safely manage exposure to asbestos:

- ✓ **Always** identify materials that might contain asbestos before contracting tradespeople to undertake work.
- ✓ If in doubt, **always** arrange for testing of materials before work starts.
- ✓ **Always** liaise with tradespeople to ensure they undertake work safely and in compliance with health and safety legislation.
- ✓ **Always** ensure the removal of more than 10m² of non-friable (bonded) asbestos is only carried out under the authority of a Class B or Class A asbestos removal licence holder.
- ✓ **Always** consult tenants and if relevant, neighbours, about the work to be undertaken and any precautions required before the work begins.
- ✓ **Always** discuss with property owners and tradespeople alternatives to removing asbestos containing material (e.g. paint or sealing using an appropriate product, covering with a suitable non-asbestos product).
- ✓ **Always** leave undamaged asbestos material intact and undisturbed.
- ✓ **Always** ensure the removal of all loose friable

asbestos containing materials is only undertaken by a class A asbestos removal licence holder.

There are also unsafe work methods that you should never use:

- ✗ **Never use** dry brooms or paint scrapers on uncoated asbestos materials.
- ✗ **Never use** power tools such as angle grinders, circular saws and electric sanders on asbestos containing materials.
- ✗ **Never use** high pressure water blasters on asbestos containing materials.
- ✗ **Never use** compressed air on asbestos containing materials e.g. domestic grade vacuum cleaners and leaf blowers.

Check to see that tradespeople are doing the right thing when working with anything thought to contain asbestos.

More information

The Workplace Health and Safety website www.worksafe.qld.gov.au has the following available for download:

- domestic asbestos locations poster
- 'uses and applications of asbestos' film
- 'Asbestos: A home renovator's and tradesperson's guide for minor work in domestic buildings'
- general information on asbestos removal and safety.

Alternatively, please call the WHS Infoline on 1300 369 915.

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Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Asbestos flooring

This fact sheet provides information regarding asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring and vinyl tiles containing asbestos.

What is asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring?

Asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring is where the 'backing' (the side attached to the floor— see Figure 1) contains friable (easily broken) asbestos material.



Figure 1 – Asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring

The vinyl sheeting itself does not contain asbestos, however, manufacturers sometimes incorporated a felt-like 'backing' for cushioning purposes. It is this backing which contains asbestos (typically 80–100 per cent).

Usually applied in sheet form, a lot of asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring had a 'terrazzo' type (colourful marble or stone chip – see Figure 2) pattern on the surface. It is most commonly found in buildings constructed before the mid-1980s.



Figure 2 – Terazzo type asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring.

What is the risk of exposure from asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring?

As the asbestos backing is sealed from the atmosphere by the overlaying vinyl, the risk of exposure to airborne fibres from asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring is low unless the vinyl material is damaged or disturbed.

Minor defects such as cracks, peeling or small worn patches in the surface vinyl will generally not cause asbestos to become airborne. However, asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring with defects must not be subject to mechanical abrasion as these kind of activities may cause further deterioration.

In cases where vinyl sheet flooring has been damaged to the extent where the asbestos containing material on the underside is disturbed, a hazard assessment must be undertaken by a competent person to assess what control measures must be implemented to control any risk.

Where asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring is to be removed, it must only be removed by an A Class asbestos removal licence holder in accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011*. Additional guidance can be found in the *How to Safely Remove Asbestos Code of Practice 2011*.

What are asbestos containing vinyl tiles?

Asbestos vinyl tiles contain 8–30 per cent asbestos in a tightly bonded matrix (see Figure 3). They do

not have a 'backing' and are usually glued directly to the floor. It should be noted that glue used to adhere the asbestos vinyl tiles to the floor may also contain asbestos.



Figure 3 – Asbestos vinyl tiles © WorkSafe Victoria

What is the risk of exposure from asbestos containing vinyl tiles?

Exposure to asbestos from asbestos containing vinyl tiles that are in good condition is thought to be very low.

Floor care treatment systems that include the use of a sealant over which the finish coats are applied should be used on asbestos containing vinyl tiles. Two or more layers of sealant should be applied as a base coat followed by one or more layers of a high percentage solids finish.

Spray buffing or dry burnishing should only be performed on floors that have sufficient finish so that the pad cannot contact the underlying asbestos vinyl tile.

The following are prohibited when cleaning asbestos containing materials:

- using power tools with an abrasive mechanism
- using high pressure spray equipment (e.g. water blasting).

Where more than 10m² of asbestos containing vinyl tiles are to be removed, and the asbestos remains in a bonded state, it must only be removed by an B or A class asbestos removal licence holder in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*. Additional guidance can be found in the *How to Safely Remove Asbestos Code of Practice 2011*.

Signage and labelling

A person with management or control of a workplace must ensure the presence and location of asbestos or ACM identified at the workplace is clearly indicated. If reasonably practicable, the asbestos or ACM must be indicated by a label. A competent person should determine the number and position of labels required. If it is not practicable to label the asbestos containing material and a risk assessment suggests asbestos containing material might be disturbed or people might be exposed, a prominent warning sign must be displayed in the immediate vicinity.

The asbestos containing material register

Asbestos backed vinyl sheet flooring and asbestos containing vinyl tiles, or any vinyl sheet flooring or tiles which are presumed to contain asbestos, must be entered into the asbestos register for the workplace.

For more information

Visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au or call the Infoline on 1300 369 915.

Visit the website to download:

- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*
- *How to Safely Remove Asbestos Code of Practice 2011*
- *How to Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace Code of Practice 2011*
- *Asbestos transitional arrangements fact sheet*
- *Clearance inspections following licensed asbestos removal work fact sheet*
- *Identifying and recording asbestos and asbestos containing materials in the workplace fact sheet*
- *Asbestos – low density asbestos fibre board fact sheet*
- *Air monitoring when removing asbestos fact sheet*
- *How to handle asbestos safely after a storm fact sheet*
- *Play it safe with asbestos: tips for property managers fact sheet*

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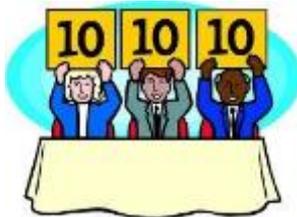
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Think DESIGN



- 👉 Is it durable and reliable?
- 👉 Is it easily cleaned and maintained?
- 👉 Is it compatible with existing environment and equipment i.e. fits through doorways and/or passageways?
- 👉 Is it easily maneuverable and adjustable (if applicable)?
- 👉 Are controls and displays visible, legible and easily operable?
- 👉 Does it facilitate good postures and safe use in handling?



Think PERFORMANCE

- 👉 Does it perform the required functions?
- 👉 What training is needed for correct use?
- 👉 Is training provided by the supplier?

Think USEABILITY

- 👉 Can it be operated by one person?
- 👉 Is there adequate storage space?
- 👉 Is an emergency repair and maintenance service agreement available?
- 👉 Is a 'user friendly' instruction manual provided?



Think RISK

- 👉 Are associated risks with equipment and parts identified and assessed?
- 👉 Would any alternative product be better?