



# ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

You may have heard the topic of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) located in buildings and the possible dangers of being exposed to Asbestos fibres.

ACM was commonly used in construction between 1945 until it was banned at the end of 2003.

Although ACM was prohibited entirely from 2004 onwards, ACM is still present in many properties. Unless the ACM is damaged or at risk of causing a hazard, there is no general requirement for its removal and disposal.

Some common products and uses of ACM are:

- Roofing sheets
- Insulation contained within fire doors
- Wall sheeting
- Pipe insulation
- Ceilings
- Lift brake shoes
- Electrical switchboards

The above list indicates how widely ACM was used in construction due to its lightweight strength properties. An ACM is not particularly harmful unless it is disturbed, such as being drilled into, cut and/or demolished.

An example could be a roofing contractor repairing a leaking roof or skylight, where it is necessary to cut into the ACM roofing sheets. Cutting the sheets will cause harmful fibres to become airborne and breathed in by the contractor or other individuals within the vicinity.

Another example of ACM is the fire insulation within an apartment front entry fire door. A locksmith may be attending to a repair of the lock and is required to drill into the door to affix a

replacement lock; harmful fibres would then become airborne.

All properties constructed before 2004 should have an ACM inspection completed. Once the inspection is carried out and it is determined that the property does not contain any ACM, no further action is required.

Should ACM be identified, an ACM Register and ACM Management Plan will be required to be prepared in order to provide residents and contractors with the necessary information on the safe management of the ACM contained at the property.

The purpose of these examples is not to cause individuals concern about living in properties containing ACM; people have and can live healthily in these properties. It is more about awareness so that adequate management can keep it safe for everyone.

The cost of an ACM Survey is reasonably low, and if ACM is found to be present, and then based on the number of areas involved, some additional cost may be necessary for the ACM Register & Management Plan.

‘The risks involved by not taking any action in determining if ACM is present, could harm individuals living, carrying out works, or visiting the property’.

Disclaimer: The articles and comments in this Fact Sheet are necessarily brief and general in nature and are not intended to be relied upon by any reader in dealing with a particular problem. Whilst all care has been taken in the preparation of this publication the writer and the producers accept no liability for any omission or misguidance. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.



# ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

## Already have an ACM Register and Management completed?

If you have an ACM Register established for the building, this information must be kept up-to-date and reviewed at least every 5 years to comply with the regulations.

If the identified ACM areas have been disturbed due to usual wear and tear or renovations have been carried out, then updates to the register and management plan are required. This is to ensure that the ACM has not become a high risk.

The risks involved by not taking action in determining if ACM is present could harm individuals living, carrying out works, or visiting the property.

If a contractor attends a property and is not notified that the property contains ACM and carries out works that cause ACM to become airborne, the property could be required to be evacuated for some time, and pervasive clean-up works may need to be carried out.

## Further information

Many information sources can be found on the internet. Below are some helpful links to further information on the requirements of managing ACM:

### NSW Health

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/asbestos-and-health-risks.aspx>

### Asbestos Awareness

<http://www.asbestosawareness.com.au/>

### Bernie Banton Foundation

<http://berniebantton.com.au/>

Disclaimer: The articles and comments in this Fact Sheet are necessarily brief and general in nature and are not intended to be relied upon by any reader in dealing with a particular problem. Whilst all care has been taken in the preparation of this publication the writer and the producers accept no liability for any omission or misguidance. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.