

Typical Hazards after Storms

Before returning to your property after an extreme storm event, consider the following hazards:

- Electrical hazards such as live power lines and solar panels.
- Structural hazards e.g. damaged to buildings, trees and other overhead objects.
- Raw sewage from damaged and/or overflowing sewerage services
- Broken fibro building materials

Identifying Potential Asbestos Containing Materials

All fibro fragments should be assumed to contain asbestos unless they have come from a building constructed post 1990.

Asbestos Health Risks

Asbestos is a known carcinogen and inhalation of these fibres can cause mesothelioma, lung cancer, asbestosis and pleural plaques after a long latency period.

Asbestos can be non-friable (bonded) or friable, with bonded asbestos posing negligible risk.

Fibro broken during storm events is generally not considered friable; however, fibro containing asbestos that has been damaged by crushing on a hard surface such as roads and driveways is considered to be friable.

Fibro in *fire damaged* building is considered friable and has increased risks.

Safe Handling of Asbestos Waste

Removal of fibro materials with a cumulative area of less than 10m² may be undertaken by residents, provided appropriate precautions are taken.

Scenario

After a storm event, you may find wet pieces of fibro on your driveway and road outside your home, where it is likely to be crushed or disturbed or on your lawn where it might be mowed.

If I decide to remove fibro fragments myself, what should I do?

Obtain two plastic bags, and disposable plastic hand gloves or washing up gloves. Obtain a P2 face mask – ask the Emergency Services people.

Step 1: Place hand **gloves** over both hands and put on **face mask**;

Step 2: Pick up (don't sweep) fragments of fibro and place in plastic bag;

Step 3: Remove gloves and face mask and place in plastic bag;

Step 4: Knot the top of the plastic bag, and then place the knotted bag into the second empty plastic bag and then knot the top (**double bag**).

Step 5: Clearly label the bag as Asbestos. Call council to arrange disposal. The asbestos bag will be a separate pile to all other waste and rubbish piles, **do not mix asbestos waste with other rubbish piles**.

Step 6: **Wash and clean hands** thoroughly with soap and water.

The Importance of Segregating Waste Streams

The waste from your property should be separated into 4 separate streams. Each waste stream is handled differently:

- Putrescible (decaying from your fridge that's been off for 24 hrs)
- Green waste (from your garden that will ideally be turned into mulch)
- Asbestos contaminated waste
- Other household waste and damaged items

Cross contamination can lead to dangerous situations such as asbestos accidentally being put through a mulcher/chipper or being broken and crushed accidentally when being picked up with other waste.

The importance of segregation cannot be overstated.



For further information...

Safe handling and removal of asbestos, visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au or call Hotline 1300 799 003

Disposal of asbestos waste, visit your local council website or www.epa.nsw.gov.au/managewaste/house-asbestos-land.htm

Health risks associated with asbestos, visit www.health.nsw.gov.au

Common areas where asbestos can be found in the home, visit www.asbestosawareness.com.au

Endorsed by the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities Working Group



DO

- ✓ wear gloves and face mask when handling asbestos containing materials
- ✓ keep asbestos containing materials damp before handling
- ✓ remove asbestos containing materials from lawns, driveways and trafficable places where it could be crushed or further broken
- ✓ segregate asbestos from other waste
- ✓ double bag asbestos waste
- ✓ contact your local council regarding the disposal of asbestos waste
- ✓ ask for help when you are not sure what to do
- ✓ look out for vehicles & keep yourself safe

DON'T

- ✗ break asbestos containing materials
- ✗ mix asbestos waste with other waste
- ✗ illegally dispose or dump asbestos waste
- ✗ leave asbestos waste in trafficable areas or where it can be further damaged
- ✗ try to clean up asbestos from fire damaged buildings



Managing Asbestos Waste after Storm Events

This information brochure provides guidance to residents on the management of fibro asbestos waste resulting from damage to property during a storm event.

Residents should always follow the advice of emergency services, utilities companies and/or local council.

Asbestos is present in many common building materials such as fibro pipes, fibro sheeting and fibro roofing in buildings constructed prior to 1990. Damage to buildings during extreme storm events may result in the breakage and dispersal of fibro containing asbestos, which may pose a health risk if asbestos fibres become airborne.

Where fibro containing asbestos is greater than 10m² in area, the fibro should be removed by a licensed asbestos removalist. A licensed asbestos removalist may be engaged by your insurer, or in special emergency circumstances, coordinated as part of the emergency operations.

Fibro and asbestos needs to be separated from all other rubbish.

