

Asbestos Containing Material

This factsheet provides staff, consumers and the hospital community with information about asbestos and how it is managed on the Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Hospital Redevelopment site. The health, safety and well-being of the community is our highest priority.

Due to the age of the buildings at RPA Hospital, it is likely that there will be asbestos present, mostly in bonded form that was previously used as building materials.

During the hospital's redevelopment, some buildings will be demolished that are likely to contain hazardous materials. It is also likely that asbestos will be encountered during excavation of the ground, from historical construction works.

How is asbestos managed on site?

Hazardous material found on sites is managed in strict accordance with Safe Work NSW and applicable legislation and guidelines.

Asbestos removal is carried out by a licensed specialist contractor under strict conditions. When removing asbestos, work is scheduled to ensure no risk to consumers, staff or the community including:

- High visibility signage will be displayed in the vicinity of worksites to notify staff and visitors of works involving hazardous materials.
- Environmental site assessment and detailed surveys (above and below ground), including air monitoring for baseline readings.
- A detailed process including isolation of the areas, establishing exclusion zone and appropriate disposal to a licensed facility to ensure the safety of staff and the community.

Ensuring the health and safety of our patients, families, visitors and staff is always our priority.

If you have any questions or are concerned about your safety at work, please speak to your manager and contact the Redevelopment Team.

FAQs

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral. Asbestos was used as a construction material up until the 1980s because of its strong fibres, low cost and fire retardant properties.

Where is asbestos used?

Most Australian buildings, including houses and hospitals built before the 1990s contain asbestos in roofing, guttering, vinyl flooring, wall sheeting and many other products. Fragments from historical construction work can also be found in the ground during excavation. The presence of asbestos is not considered harmful unless it is disturbed and inhaled.

When does asbestos pose a risk to health?

Asbestos fibres can pose a risk to health if they become airborne, as inhalation is the main way that asbestos enters the body.

Small quantities of asbestos fibres are present in the air at all times. Most people are exposed to very small amounts of asbestos as they go about their daily lives and do not develop asbestos-related health problems.

Finding that your home or workplace has asbestos does not mean your health is at risk.

People who have suffered health effects from exposure to asbestos have usually had high levels of exposure to airborne dust. They commonly worked in either the asbestos mining or milling industry, industries involved in making or installing asbestos products, or are from the immediate families of these people. This was before disposable protective clothing requirements and other measures were introduced.

How can I contact the project team?

If you have any questions or would like more information please contact our project team at the details below.

Email: SLHD-RPAREdevelopment@health.nsw.gov.au | Website: www.rparedevelopment.health.nsw.gov.au