

ILLEGAL ASBESTOS DUMPING FORCES EUCHAREENA WASTE FACILITY CLOSURE

Dubbo Regional Council has been forced to close the Euchareena Waste Facility until further notice due to a large amount of asbestos waste that was dumped at the site.

Council's Manager Solid Waste Mark Giebel said that it appears that the waste has come from a renovation and as it contains a lot of sheeting from old walls.

"People really need to be aware of the risks that asbestos poses and avoid playing renovation roulette," he said.

"The fact that one of the Waste Facilities in our LGA has been contaminated, it is timely for the community, including tradespeople and home renovators, to familiarize themselves with the NSW Heads of Asbestos Co-ordination Authorities (HACAs*) 4 Top Tips for safely managing asbestos during home maintenance, renovations and DIY.

Proper management of asbestos is important because of the significant impacts on your lungs that asbestos can cause in the longer term.

"Asbestos can be present in many houses and buildings built before 1987 and most people can't tell whether building materials contain asbestos just by looking at them.

"Asbestos becomes a health risk when asbestos fibres are released into the air and breathed in. So it is important for everyone to take precautions and be aware of how to safely handle and dispose of asbestos," Mr Giebel said.

"Following these tips will help to ensure safety for everyone – tradies, DIY renovators and their families."

1. BE AWARE - Is it there?

- If your house was built or renovated before 1987, it is highly likely to contain asbestos. Asbestos can occur in all sorts of places in the home, but especially in wet areas like bathrooms and kitchens. Get more information about where it can occur from here.
- If you're not sure, then play it safe and assume that you do have asbestos.
- If you want to be certain, then engage a Licensed Asbestos Assessor to tell you.

2. BE CAUTIOUS - No go, until you know!

- Treat all products containing any amount of asbestos as potentially dangerous if disturbed, and don't DIY it. Protect yourself and your family and use a Licensed Asbestos Removalist instead. They have the proper training to deal with asbestos safely.

- If you do decide to DIY small amounts of bonded asbestos, then make sure you know what to do and are prepared with the proper personal protective equipment. BE SAFE – Safely dispose, don't expose

3. BE CURIOUS -If in doubt, find out!

- Check the rules and dispose safely! It is critical that asbestos waste is wrapped properly and goes to properly licensed landfills, so that it does not cause a health risk to people in the community. It is illegal to dump asbestos waste.
- You can find a list of landfills that can accept asbestos waste here, but always call ahead in case you need to book a time to drop it off.
- Call the 1800 Asbestos Hotline (1800 272 378), which provides free advice and guidance on asbestos-related issues and is a central point of contact for all asbestos enquiries in NSW.
- If your enquiry is about asbestos waste disposal then call the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555, or
- Visit www.asbestosawareness.com.au for a large range of information about asbestos and how to handle it.

Mr Giebel also said that with recent changes to legislation Council and EPA can now issue on the spot fines of \$15,000 for illegal transportation and disposal of asbestos, with maximum court imposed penalty of \$2 million.

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