



ASBESTOS AWARENESS MONTH THIS NOVEMBER

November is Asbestos Awareness Month and aims to raise awareness of the dangers of asbestos among homeowners and renovators and how to manage asbestos safely.

Asbestos was used as a key building material for many years and is present in numerous buildings, including residential houses. Asbestos can be found in old fibro type material, lagging on pipes, old sewer and water pipes, old vinyl type flooring and even putty in very old windows. Asbestos is a natural material and was mined to produce the asbestos materials in buildings.

Asbestos can cause serious health issues to people, seriously affecting lungs and lung function. This includes asbestos including asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer. Every year hundreds of people die from asbestos related diseases.

“Asbestos is an issue in the Dubbo Local Government Area and most other Local Government Areas for that matter. It generally is present in some form in any house or building constructed pre-December 2003,”

Dubbo Regional Council Environment Health Services Team Leader Mark Smith said.

“Dubbo has a high number of buildings containing asbestos. It was a cheap building material to use at the time and was used in a lot of houses and other buildings for this reason.”

The most common form of asbestos is in fibro cement sheeting, which is hard to identify. Identifying other forms of asbestos usually requires scientific analysis but anything that is old concrete or fibro building materials that contain small white fibres is likely to contain asbestos.

“Asbestos being present in a building does not need to create a concern as long as the asbestos is sealed by a paint and isn’t broken, disturbed or burnt,” Mr Smith said.

“If a resident is renovating an area where there is more than 10 square metres of material containing asbestos, they will have to engage a SafeWork NSW licensed asbestos removalist to remove and dispose of the asbestos containing material.”

It is important that people do not burn asbestos, it will not burn and burning material containing asbestos will release the fibres into the air for you to breathe in.

For more information about asbestos and prevention of asbestos-related diseases visit asbestosawareness.com.au.

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