

## Media Release

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# Home renovators reminded of asbestos safety

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and SafeWork SA are urging South Australian renovators to take the required precautions to reduce their risk of exposure to asbestos.

The warning comes during National Asbestos Awareness Week.

EPA Manager Investigations and Waste Compliance, Steve Barry, said the warmer months coincides with an increased number of people undertaking maintenance or upgrades of their homes or properties.

“Asbestos materials were commonly used in buildings constructed before the 1980s that can crumble into fine material or dust with light pressure, known as friable, or are made from a bonding compound with a small proportion of asbestos, known as non-friable,” Mr Barry said.

“The removal of asbestos is treated seriously in South Australia because sufficient quantities of inhalation of fine asbestos fibres over time, can cause significant health issues,” he said.

“Before any demolition or refurbishment takes place, ensure that you have identified any potential asbestos by contracting a licenced asbestos assessor or removalist. Disposal of asbestos to an EPA-licenced landfill is the only responsible and safe option,” he said.

The EPA is also reminding renovators that high-pressure water sprays to clean a roof can be extremely hazardous.

“This type of cleaning can cause asbestos fibres to be released creating a health risk to the renovator and their neighbours. This then requires professional attention to remediate and can result in a costly clean-up bill,” he said.

More information about licenced asbestos removal, transport and disposal services can be found on the [EPA website](#) or the South Australian Government [asbestos website](#).

Costs for asbestos removal will vary from contractor to contractor, and it is recommended that the renovator contacts a few assessors and removalists to ensure any work will be undertaken in a planned safe manner.

“Simply by requesting copies of receipts from the transporter for their asbestos disposal to a licenced asbestos landfill can ensure good practice,” Mr Barry said.

Penalties for non-compliance or illegally dumping asbestos materials applies. If anyone is found to have illegally disposed asbestos, a maximum penalty of \$500,000 or four years imprisonment applies for an individual, or a maximum of \$2 million for a body corporate.

In South Australia, the EPA and SafeWork SA are the two agencies that work together to ensure that when a home renovation requires the removal of asbestos that it is done properly and safely.

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For further information please contact EPA Media: 0439 137 641 or [epamedia@sa.gov.au](mailto:epamedia@sa.gov.au)

Environment Protection Authority