



# National Asbestos Awareness Survey Results 2022

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency engaged SEC Newgate Research to conduct a nationally representative survey to measure progress towards its Asbestos National Strategic Plan targets — evaluating knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and information needs regarding asbestos risks in 2022.

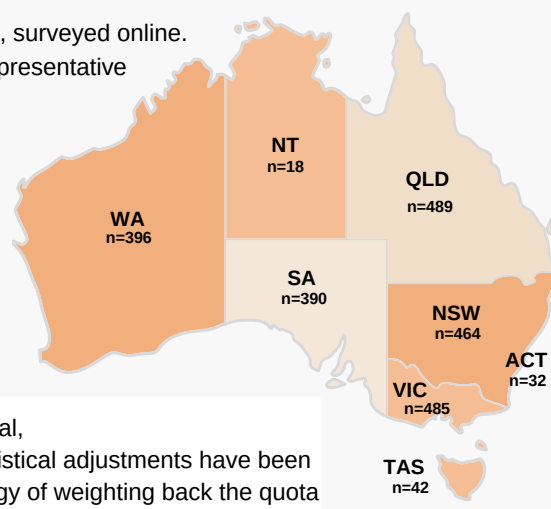
The survey (carried out in March-April 2022) included sample boosts to ensure focussed insights into three key cohorts of interest.

This factsheet contains the key findings of the national (n=2,095) survey results.

## National Participant Overview:

- The survey was conducted with n=2,316 Australian adults in total.
- The population-representative 'main sample' included n=2,095 participants, surveyed online.
- The jurisdictional split in sample numbers were set based on population-representative Census proportions.

	Total adult population (online)	Household decision mkrs (online)	Workers in key sectors (online)	Tradesppl (online and telephone)
Sample size (n=)	2,095	1,997	456	400



**To note:** While the survey was conducted with n=2,316 Australian adults in total, to avoid overrepresentation of any particular demographic (sampling-bias) statistical adjustments have been made to reflect population-representative Census proportions. This methodology of weighting back the quota results, ensures findings are representative of the Australian adult population.

For the purpose of the survey results, 'Total adult population' has been adjusted to the population-representative 'main sample' size of n=2,095 participants.

## The cohorts

**Household decision makers:** For the purpose of this survey, "homeowners and home occupiers" translated as those who make key household decisions. Amongst the total adult population, 95% described themselves as being primarily or jointly responsible for major household decisions—making them a priority cohort given their decisions (e.g., to commence a home improvement project) can expose the rest of their household to asbestos risks.

**Workers in key sectors:** Workers in sectors with a higher prevalence of buildings that are more likely to contain asbestos (22% of all Australian adults) —in particular, those working in correctional and detention services, education and training, health care and social assistance, public administration and safety, or another sector with a government-owned building.

**Tradespeople:** Tradespersons in contact with asbestos-containing materials were defined in this study through a combination of relevant industry sectors and roles. Within the general population main sample, they accounted for 8% of all Australian adults—including several dozen types of roles in construction, professional trades, utilities, manufacturing, and repair and maintenance

## Key findings

Across the cohorts, Australians viewed the possibility of encountering asbestos or contracting an asbestos-related disease in their personal life as low—with encountering undisturbed ACMs rated the most likely.

20% admit to considering at least one inappropriate disposal method—and among these are a higher prevalence of tradespeople, workers in key sectors, recent migrants, younger people, those with children living at home, those who prefer to DIY, and men in general.

When shown a list, 90% are able to choose at least one correct household site where asbestos might be present but only 75% at most can correctly identify each potential site of asbestos.

Those unsure of where asbestos may be found are more likely to be younger and/or to speak a language other than English at home.




Over 80% of Australians agree it is worth paying a professional to dispose of any asbestos found in your home.






## AWARENESS IN AUSTRALIA

National Target One of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan is increased awareness of the health risks of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) and where to source information.

Key survey indicators of asbestos awareness levels in Australia are below:

	Increasing the awareness and knowledge of health risks of ACMs:			Increasing awareness of where to source information:	
	% that know at least a 'little bit about asbestos health impacts	% are aware that the poorer the condition of ACM, the higher the risk to health	% that are aware that the health impacts of asbestos are not immediately noticeable.	% that know at least one source they would turn to if they needed information about asbestos	% that know at least one government source they would turn to if they need information about asbestos
 Household decision-makers	81%	71%	58%	92%	59%
 Workers in key sectors	79%	67%	54%	94%	56%
 Tradespeople	89%	75%	70%	98%	53%

### Additional insights:

 Household decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>84% believe “it is worth paying a professional to dispose of any asbestos found in your home”</li> <li>74% have not seen, heard, or read anything about asbestos in the last 12 months.</li> <li>15% believed “only tradespeople run the risk of disturbing asbestos”.</li> </ul>
 Workers in key sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% displayed a <b>higher level of confidence</b> when it came to handling materials containing asbestos</li> <li>28% displayed a <b>higher level of confidence</b> when it came to disposing of materials containing asbestos</li> <li><b>More likely</b> compared to the rest of the population to have selected inappropriate disposal methods (31% v 16%)</li> </ul>
 Tradespeople	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>69% have not looked for information or asked someone about asbestos in the last 12 months</li> <li>23% agreed that “it is okay for a tradesperson of any qualification to remove asbestos from a workplace”.</li> <li>18% remained unsure or incorrectly believed some risky construction items did not contain asbestos</li> </ul>