

- **DO NOT** cover it over as this only hides it which could result in someone accidentally cutting into it
- **DO** get the material tested by a NATA-accredited laboratory if you are unsure if it contains asbestos
- **ALWAYS** ensure the ACM is thoroughly wet down and kept wet during your work to minimise the release of asbestos fibres and/or dust.

For more information, contact the work health and safety regulator in your state or territory.

For further information

Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
www.asbestossafety.gov.au

National Association of Testing Authorities
www.nata.com.au

SafeWork Australia
www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

Some photos in this document are courtesy of
Asbestos Audits Queensland

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency

was established on 1 July 2013 to provide a national focus on asbestos issues which goes beyond workplace safety to encompass environmental and public health concerns. The agency aims to ensure asbestos issues receive the attention and focus needed to drive change across all levels of government.

This brochure was developed with the assistance of the Building, Construction and Demolition Sectors Committee established by the agency.



Australian Government
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency



Asbestos awareness information for the automotive industry

ASEA | April 2018

Basic safety

Keep a cartridge half face mask (P2) and some additional paper (P2) disposable masks on hand in your toolbox as backups which you can dispose of appropriately later.

Keep some important equipment in your work vehicle like a water spray bottle, disposable overalls, gloves, a 200 micron thick plastic bag and duct tape to seal the waste material. That way you are not leaving the asbestos-containing waste lying around to cause the next person to be exposed to dangerous asbestos fibres.

If you work at a premises or a mobile workshop, consider setting up a container such as an empty drum with a lid or other suitable container lined with plastic (200um available from industrial suppliers) so that all brake shoes, linings, clutch plates, gaskets and seals can be disposed of as potential asbestos-contaminated waste instead of in landfill.

Try not to give in to the “she’ll be right this time mindset” in order to get a job done more quickly. Think of yourself and your family even though the asbestos fibres that can harm you are invisible they are there and you can easily take them home with you! And years of “I’ll just get this done quickly” can cost you your life.

If you have to handle or work with asbestos-containing materials, it is important to remember:

- **DO NOT** use power tools
- **DO NOT** use abrasive cutting or sanding discs
- **DO NOT** use compressed air or high-pressure water hose
- **DO NOT** walk on corrugated asbestos-cement roofs as you may run the risk of falling through
- **DO NOT** leave ACMs where they may be broken or crushed allowing fibres to escape into the air or into the environment

Mechanics can be exposed to asbestos in almost any type of vehicle anywhere from small kit all terrain buggies to huge coal excavators and trucks at a mining site.

Why is it important to be aware of asbestos when working as a mechanic?

Asbestos is a known carcinogen, and inhaling asbestos fibres is associated with diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. Even limited or short-term exposure to asbestos fibres can be dangerous.

If a car or vehicle was manufactured prior to 2003, it is likely to contain some form of asbestos material. Due to its prevalence in the automotive industry, it is important to know where in a vehicle you are most likely to encounter asbestos and how to avoid disturbing it.

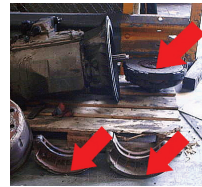
Asbestos in good condition that is unlikely to be disturbed poses minimal health risk, however airborne fibres are easily generated during maintenance operations like removal of components or from mechanical action such as drilling, cutting or sanding. It is important to know whether asbestos is present before you begin work to ensure that it remains undisturbed.



Where is asbestos found in typical Australian vehicles?

The most common part of vehicles still containing asbestos in Australia are:

- Brake pads, linings and wheel rims
- clutch plates and housings
- Seals & gaskets



Historically, asbestos was also used in a number of other areas including:

- Pipe wrap insulation
- Insulation to exhaust systems (flat & rope)
- plastic asbestos parts (seat bases, battery holders)
- Underbody or soundproofing (under floor pan, rear parcel shelf, boot, under bonnet)

The use of asbestos in these areas is now uncommon unless you are restoring an old vehicle. You should familiarise yourself with common asbestos materials and where they are typically found.

Images: examples of some areas that auto mechanics should be aware of. Please be aware that these examples should not be taken as an exhaustive list.



How do I know whether something contains asbestos?

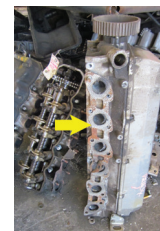
It is not possible to determine whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it. The only way to be sure is to get a sample of the material tested.

It is recommend that testing is undertaken by a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited laboratory where possible. These laboratories can be found list on their website at www.nata.com.au.

It is also recommended that you engage an experienced professional to take samples of suspected asbestos material for you. If you are going to take samples yourself, it is important that you first familiarise yourself with the steps and safety requirements outlined in the guidance available at www.asbestosafety.gov.au/identification-and-testing/asbestos-sampling-and-testing or refer to the *Model Code of Practice - How to Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace* published by Safe Work Australia www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/managecontrol-asbestos-cop
If in doubt, assume that the material contains asbestos!

What should I do if asbestos is present?

Asbestos material in good condition does not pose a significant health risk, however it should be monitored over time to detect any deterioration or changes in its condition. You must not drill, cut or sand asbestos-containing materials.



Bonded (non-friable) asbestos material greater than 10m² needs to be removed by a Class B licenced asbestos removalist. All friable asbestos material must be removed by a Class A licenced asbestos removalist. For a list of licence holders, visit the website of the work health and safety regulator in your state or territory.

For information on non-licenced removal work with bonded asbestos (less than 10m²), please refer to the *SafeWork Australia Model Code of Practice - How to Safely Remove Asbestos*.

What are some of the common mechanics activities I need to take care with?

Removing and replacing gaskets and clutch and brake linings are the biggest hazards for mechanics as is sanding or cleaning out asbestos-containing dust.

Asbestos can be friable or non-friable. Friable means you can break it up with just your fingers. For example new asbestos brake pads may be non-friable but when removing them after wear they and the associated dust can be friable.

