



ASBESTOS AWARENESS

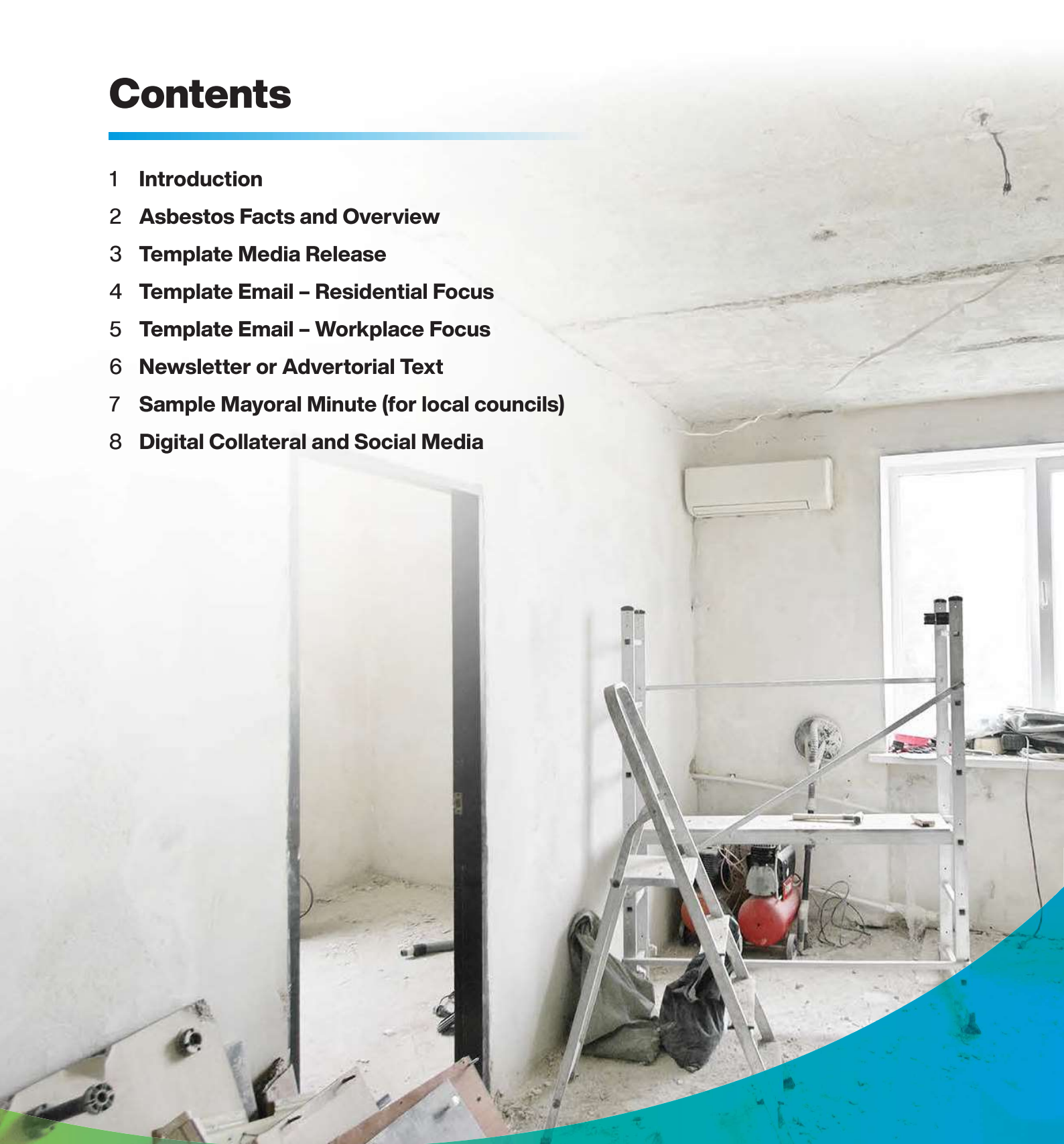
WEEK

23-29 NOV.20

Content for
stakeholder use

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BEFORE YOU START, BE AWARE.

ASBESTOS

**lurks in more places
than you'd think.**

Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think



Asbestos is still present in millions of Australian homes and can be easily disturbed when doing renovations, home improvements and maintenance.

If a home was built or renovated prior to 1990, there is a good chance it has some asbestos.

Many Australians know what asbestos is, but few fully understand the **health risks, where** it can be found, and **how to protect themselves** from exposure if they find it.

Evidence suggests that during the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a boom in DIY home improvements giving rise to concerns of increased asbestos exposure risk. If these risks are not properly addressed, increased DIY activity in Australia during this time could be sowing the seeds for a future health crisis.

- Research commissioned by ASEA (conducted by Newgate Research) found that at least a third of survey participants had commenced a 'DIY' project since March 2020, a notably high proportion.
- When asked to name potential risks in DIY (not provided with prompts), hardly any DIYers mentioned asbestos (just 5 per cent).
- Bunnings second-half sales growth were up 25.6 per cent as customers took advantage of the COVID-19 restrictions to make improvements to their homes and gardens (Wesfarmers' 2020 full-year results).
- Spending on property maintenance like electrical services, roofing, air conditioning servicing and rubbish removal has increased significantly (www.serviceseeking.com).
- Between April and June 2020 quotes for renovations and custom-built homes more than doubled, fuelled by Government grants like the HomeBuilder grant (ARF, 19 August 2020).
- SafeWork South Australia have reported a 10 per cent increase in asbestos notification during the COVID-19 period, as an example of just one jurisdiction.

Acknowledging these findings and recognising that Australians are likely to continue their pattern of DIY home improvement and maintenance well into 2021, the aim of **Asbestos Awareness Week 2020** is educating **householders and tradies** on **where they might find asbestos** in the residential environment and if found, what they should do to **stay safe**.

The theme '**Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think**' will be supplemented with the sub-theme '**before you start, be aware**'. The sub-theme relates to the fact that people are using the extra time at home to do home improvements and maintenance.

The campaign messaging:

- 1 KNOW the health risks of asbestos exposure**
- 2 BE AWARE of where asbestos might be found before you start work ("it lurks in more places than you'd think")**
- 3 CALL a professional to check, remove and dispose of it safely**

These messages are also suitable for when a residential property becomes a workplace because a tradie is performing work at the property.

This stakeholder pack provides template materials that can be easily adapted for different targets. It is appreciated that government and non-government organisations will choose the target population group/s depending on their need and focus.

This package provides sample copy and design for free use by government and non-government organisations for Asbestos Awareness Week 2020.

We are pleased to provide you with the report from our recent research into DIY during COVID-19.

The hashtag is #asbestosawarenessweek and #asbestoslurks.

Images are able to have your logo inserted to customise for your purposes.

Sample text is provided for your use, and can be edited for your purposes.

If you need any assistance or wish to check any of the information provided, please get in touch with the us.

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Asbestos Facts and Overview



- An estimated **4,000** Australians die annually from asbestos-related disease. This is more than triple the annual road toll.
- Approximately **700** people die annually from the aggressive cancer mesothelioma caused by exposure to asbestos.
- A house built or renovated before **1990** has a good chance of containing asbestos.
- Asbestos was used in over **3,000** products prior to 1990 – a great many of these were in residential construction and fit out.
- Asbestos was completely banned in Australia in **2003 (December 31, 2003)**.
- Over **6,000** tonnes of asbestos is illegally dumped per year.
- The World Health Organization says there is no known safe minimum level of exposure.
- You cannot see asbestos fibres – they are invisible to the naked eye.



DIY / HOME MAINTENANCE FACTS

Research commissioned by ASEA in 2020 found that:

- 57% of Australians are 'DIYers' – people who have or would undertake at least part of a renovation or maintenance project by themselves.
- 40% of DIYers have worked on a risky property (built between 1940 - 1990).
- At least a third of projects started in the last 5 years have begun during early COVID-19 restrictions (March – June 2020).
- Almost no one names asbestos as a high-risk consideration in DIY without being prompted. (5% vs 22% for electrical).
- 1 in 5 DIYers had encountered asbestos in a previous project, but only half sought any kind of professional help to deal with it.
- 35% of those who have encountered asbestos in the past admit to inappropriate (illegal) disposal – mostly in their own or a neighbour's household bin.
- Though most DIYers felt it was important to know how to manage asbestos risks, only around half felt confident identifying or managing asbestos.

Source: Newgate Research for ASEA 2020.



Where can you find asbestos in the home?

The following list is not exhaustive but gives you an example of the many varied locations that asbestos was used in homes between the 1940s – 1990.

Outside the home

- roof sheeting and capping
- gutters, gables and eaves/soffits
- water pipes and flues
- cladding for walls, including imitation brick cladding
- fencing
- carports, garages, outhouses, garden sheds

Inside the home

- wall sheeting, particularly in wet areas such as the kitchen, bathroom, toilet and laundry
- ceiling sheeting
- plaster patching compounds and textured paint
- electrical switchboards
- vinyl floor tiles and felt backing for vinyl and linoleum flooring
- insulation in domestic heaters and stoves



Template Media Release



National Asbestos Awareness Week 2020:

Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think

It is easy to forget that asbestos is still present in millions of Australian homes, but it's a fact that if a house was built or renovated before 1990, there's a good chance it has some asbestos.

Asbestos can be easily disturbed when doing renovations, home improvements and maintenance.

National Asbestos Awareness Week 2020 reminds Australians to be asbestos aware before they start any work around the home. Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think.

Asbestos is a known carcinogen and inhaling asbestos fibres can cause a number of life-threatening diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

Asbestos-related diseases cause approximately 4,000 deaths a year.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Australians have increased their love of DIY and are using the extra time at home to do some home improvements and maintenance.

But what they may not know is that this work could be putting their health or someone else's health at risk. Asbestos materials are still commonly found in bathrooms, laundries, and kitchens as well as behind tiles and under flooring.

"We are encouraging Australians to make sure an asbestos check forms part of their DIY checklist before they start their home improvements," said XXXXXXX.

"Research shows that 1 in 5 DIYers have encountered asbestos, but only half sought any kind of professional help to deal with it.

"Additionally, a third admitted to disposing of the asbestos improperly – including in their own household bin or in a neighbour's bin," said XXXXX.

"Just like plumbing and electrical work, asbestos removal – or jobs around the home that might uncover asbestos - are jobs best left to the experts." said XXXXX"

"This Asbestos Awareness Week we are calling on Australians to **know** the health risk, be **aware** of where asbestos might be found before starting work and **call** a professional for help.

Be aware: Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think."

ENDS

Media Contact:

Template Email Text – Residential Focus



NAME –

Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think.

Did you know if your home was built before the 1990s there's a good chance it has some asbestos?

Did you know it's often found *under flooring, as part of kitchen splashbacks or even in the garden?*
[change locations as desired]

National Asbestos Awareness Week 2020 reminds Australians to be asbestos aware before starting any work around the home - because it lurks in more places than you'd think.

Know the risks.

Don't risk the possible health effects of asbestos exposure.

Asbestos becomes dangerous once the fibres are disturbed, become airborne and then inhaled. This can happen if you're sanding, drilling, cutting or sawing asbestos-containing materials.

Asbestos is a known carcinogen and inhaling asbestos fibres can cause a number of life-threatening diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

Asbestos-related diseases cause approximately 4,000 deaths a year – three times the annual road toll.

Be aware of where asbestos might be in your home.

Asbestos was used in hundreds of building materials, commonly found in bathrooms, laundries, and kitchens as well as behind tiles and under flooring [*change locations as suits audience*].

Find out where asbestos might be here [link to your state's asbestos website here – see below for URL addresses]

Watch this video about asbestos in the home here. [<https://vimeo.com/446981826>]

Call for some advice and help

Thinking about a summer renovation? Make sure you're aware of where asbestos might be found so you know how to stay safe.

Just like plumbing and electrical work, asbestos removal – or jobs around the home that might uncover asbestos - are jobs best left to the experts.

This Asbestos Awareness Week we are calling on Australians to **know** the health risk, be **aware** of where asbestos might be found before starting work, and **call** a professional for advice and help.

State and Territory Asbestos Websites to insert above:

NSW www.asbestos.nsw.gov.au

VIC www.asbestos.vic.gov.au/

QLD www.asbestos.qld.gov.au

TAS www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety

ACT www.asbestos.act.gov.au

SA www.asbestos.sa.gov.au

WA www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/asbestos-frequently-asked-questions

NT www.asbestos.nt.gov.au

Template Email Text – Workplace Focus



NAME –

Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think.

Did you know if a house was built or renovated before 1990, there is a **good chance** it has some asbestos.

Did you know it's often found *under flooring, as part of kitchen splashbacks or even in the garden?*
[change locations as desired]

This Asbestos Awareness Week, 23 – 29 November 2020, **[your organisation here]** is reminding tradies to be asbestos aware because it lurks in more places than you'd think.

Work health and safety (WHS) laws prohibit work involving asbestos apart from in specific circumstances where you are required to follow strict safety rules.

The law may also prevent you from removing asbestos yourself, and if you are allowed, you must follow strict safety precautions and use the right Personal Protective Equipment.

Commercial and public buildings built before a certain date are required to have an asbestos register – but that's not the case for homes, even though they are often workplaces too.

Where might asbestos be in a home? You can find out here [link to state asbestos site or www.asbestossafety.gov.au/find-out-about-asbestos/asbestos-home]

Asbestos becomes dangerous once the fibres are disturbed, become airborne and then inhaled. This can happen if you're sanding, drilling, cutting or sawing asbestos.

Asbestos is a known carcinogen and inhaling asbestos fibres can cause a number of life-threatening diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

Don't risk the possible health effects of asbestos exposure. The World Health Organization says there is no known safe level of exposure to asbestos fibres.

Watch this video about asbestos exposure in the workplace here. [<https://vimeo.com/446982099>]

You wouldn't do electrical wiring without training, the same is true for handling or removing any asbestos. It's always safer – and usually cheaper too – to call in an asbestos professional.

Find out more about asbestos in the workplace here [link to WorkSafe / SafeWork in your state or territory]

Potential products to insert above, depending on your audience:

- Roofs, eaves, downpipes and insulation
- Interior walls (often with a non-asbestos covering on the outside)
- Kitchen splashbacks
- Under lino, some carpets, and tiles (and the cement compounds used to affix tiles)
- Lagging around pipes, inside fuse boxes or as part of ventilation shafts
- Fences, garden sheds and small outdoor construction like chicken coops
- As part of bonded cement compounds that make up walls – disturbed when you sand for painting

Template Newsletter or Advertorial Text



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TAS www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety

ACT : www.asbestos.act.gov.au

SA www.asbestos.sa.gov.au

WA www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/asbestos-frequently-asked-questions

NT www.asbestos.nt.gov.au