

Table 1: Summary of all asbestos waste by reported type and jurisdiction in 2023-24 (tonnes)

| ASBESTOS WASTE TYPE | ACT | NSW | NT | Qld | SA | Tas | Vic | WA |
|--|-------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Wrapped ACM only | 6,752 | 248,794 | | | 20,564 | 11,663 | 71,072 | 23,963 |
| Wrapped ACM + waste contaminated with friable asbestos | | | | 204,328 | | | | |
| Wrapped ACM + waste contaminated with <i>only</i> asbestos | | | | | | | 26,500 | |
| Wrapped ACM + waste contaminated with asbestos | | | 12,281 | | | | | |
| Soil contaminated with asbestos | | 547,848 | | | | | 22,200 | |

Note: The assumed density of any asbestos figures received in cubic metres is 0.8 t/m³

Table 2: Best estimate of asbestos waste volumes (i.e. data that includes wrapped ACM, tonnes)

| Year | ACT | NSW | NT | Qld | SA | Tas | Vic | WA | Australia |
|---------|-------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|
| 2023-24 | 6,752 | 248,794 | 12,281 | 204,328 | 20,564 | 11,663 | 97,572 | 23,963 | 625,917 |

Table 3: Summary of all reported asbestos waste in the last decade (tonnes per annum)

This includes wrapped ACM, soil and rubble contaminated with ACM; except **blue cells**, which are wrapped ACM only.

| Year | ACT | NSW | NT | Qld | SA | Tas | Vic | WA | Australia |
|---------|---------|-----------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| 2013-14 | 6,680 | 420,000 | 1,810 | 120,728 | 15,991 | 14,972 | 74,046 | 29,237 | 683,464 |
| 2014-15 | 5,856 | 306,465 | 2,000 | 150,302 | 14,517 | 15,015 | 80,078 | 38,492 | 612,725 |
| 2015-16 | 68,405 | 508,156 | 5,982 | 145,102 | 9,224 | 15,085 | 101,636 | 38,724 | 892,314 |
| 2016-17 | 208,474 | 682,444 | 5,913 | 154,608 | 11,770 | 15,228 | 118,626 | 39,000 | 1,236,063 |
| 2017-18 | 94,293 | 1,158,050 | 5,225 | 149,873 | 17,302 | 5,059 | 154,520 | 31,886 | 1,616,207 |
| 2018-19 | 48,176 | 1,318,779 | 7,118 | 152,552 | 42,987 | 3,259 | 102,842 | 24,772 | 1,700,485 |
| 2019-20 | 17,741 | 899,444 | 17,435 | 154,918 | 35,694 | 4,094 | 178,670 | 24,165 | 1,332,162 |
| 2020-21 | 19,559 | 841,900 | 38,483 | 326,276 | 21,829 | 3,844 | 136,925 | 17,657 | 1,406,474 |
| 2021-22 | 13,622 | 601,933 | 47,398 | 188,466 | 45,455 | 4,244 | 243,418 | 20,679 | 1,165,215 |
| 2022-23 | 9,624 | 839,435 | 59,720 | 194,191 | 25,258 | 149 | 71,117 | 18,868*** | 1,218,363 |
| 2023-24 | 6,752 | 796,642* | 12,281 | 204,328 | 20,564 | 11,663 | 119,772** | 23,963 | 1,195,965 |

Table 3 data sources:

Black numbers – Provided in collated form by the jurisdiction

Purple numbers – Collated from transport certificates

Red numbers – Estimate based on population change x previous data

Orange numbers – Estimate only (extrapolated or interpolated)

* Partially incomplete data due to reporting shortfalls

** Data includes all reported asbestos waste

*** Updated data from previous 2022-23 reporting period

Volume comparisons

(density of asbestos estimated as 0.8 tonnes per m³)

1,195,965 tonnes (total of all asbestos waste disposed 2023-24 – see Table 3) equals 1,494,956 cubic metres (m³).

This is equivalent to 597 Olympic swimming pools and is almost enough to fill up the Melbourne Cricket Ground which is estimated to have a volume of 1,574,000 cubic metres (m³).



Source: How big is the MCG? Surveyors find exact measurements of Melbourne Cricket Ground - ABC News

Current stocks

Current asbestos stocks in the built environment are estimated at **6.2 million tonnes** (range 5.5 to 7.1 million tonnes). The largest product group estimates are for **asbestos cement** of which **54%** is cement pipes and **42%** is cement sheeting. The other **4%** is made up of roofing, flooring and lagging products.

Source: Asbestos Stocks and Flows Legacy in Australia

Figure 1: Tonnes of asbestos waste disposed from 2006-07 to 2023-24 (including soil and rubble contaminated with ACM in NSW, NT, Qld and Vic).

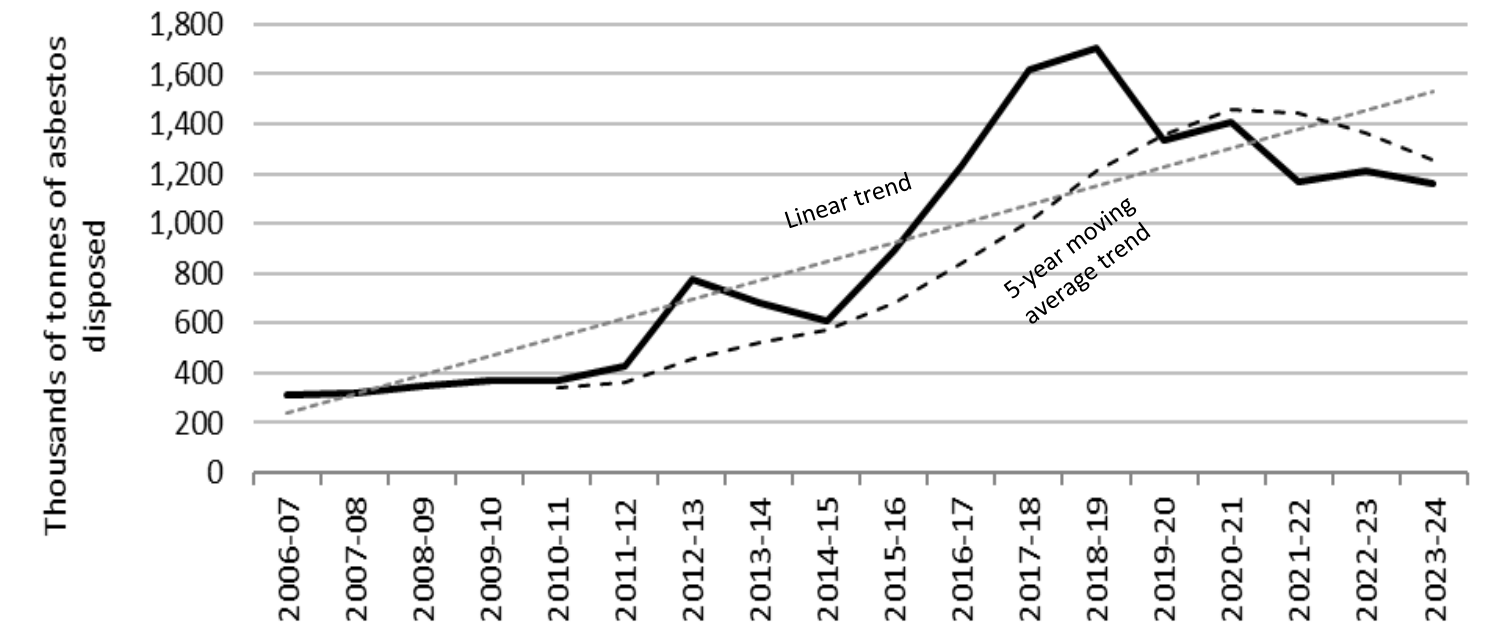
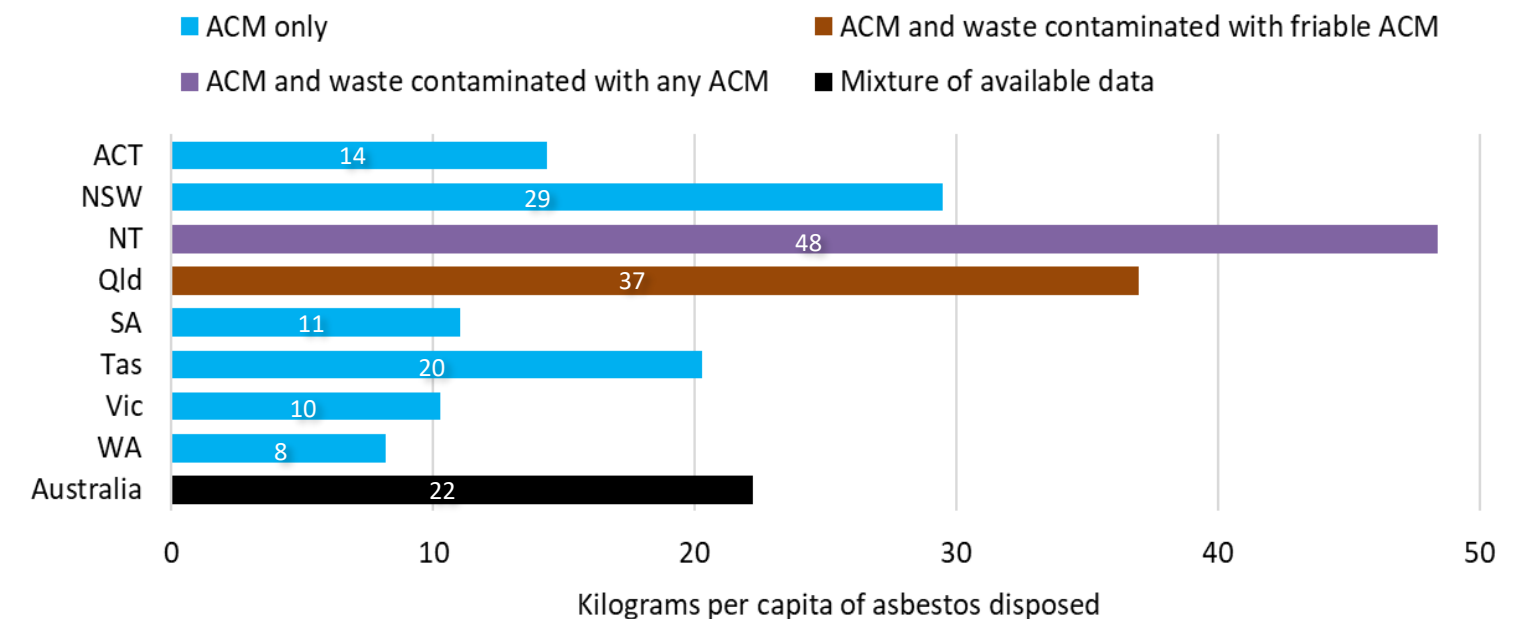


Figure 2: Quantities of asbestos waste disposed per capita by jurisdiction 2023-24



Improved data collection

Australia’s states and territories continue to take steps to improve data collection on volumes of asbestos waste.

Asbestos waste disposal data is tracked by jurisdictional environment protection authorities.

Data quality appears improved, particularly in Tas and Vic. All jurisdictions, except NT and Qld, are able to report quantities of wrapped asbestos-containing material (ACM, such as asbestos cement sheets) separately from waste contaminated with ACM (such as soil and rubble).

Some asbestos waste may be excluded from these records, including:

- ▶ waste from natural disasters
- ▶ some domestic or smaller loads that do not need to be tracked in some jurisdictions
- ▶ asbestos in soils in most jurisdictions

Data quality

A quality assessment of the 2023-24 data is provided in Table 4.

Overall, the quality of data has improved. Low data quality are more likely to lead to an under-estimate than an over-estimate because the issues are generally associated with data being incomplete or in shortfall.

Table 5: Assessment of data quality 2023-24

| ACT | NSW | NT | Qld | SA | Tas | Vic | WA |
|------|------|--------|--------|------|------|------|--------|
| High | High | Medium | Medium | High | High | High | Medium |

Data Limitations



Hazardous waste tracking systems are maintained primarily to enable checking of transport certificates and operators in the event of suspected illicit activity.

Many thousands of records are collected each year, some of which need to be transcribed from paper-based forms. They are inconsistently collated, and gaps or errors may not always be recognised or followed up.

Best current estimates

The best estimate of the quantity of asbestos waste reported in Australia in 2023-24 was about **625,000 tonnes**. This comprises of any data that includes wrapped ACM.

The total quantity of all asbestos waste including soil and rubble contaminated with asbestos was about **1,196,000 tonnes**.

ASSEA encourages states and territories to report wrapped ACM separately from soil and rubble contaminated with ACM, to enable further progress towards harmonised national asbestos waste recording methods.

Fate of asbestos waste

Most asbestos waste comes from renovation and urban development and goes to landfill.

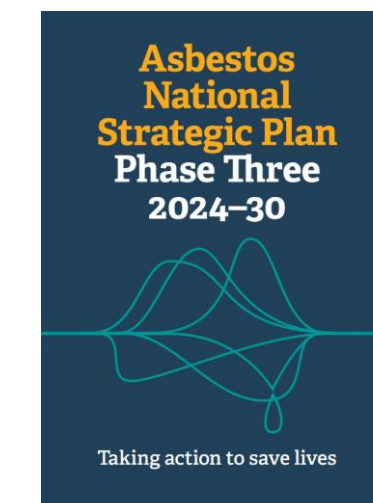
State and territory governments capture data on asbestos-contaminated waste from their tracking systems for hazardous wastes (under the code N220) and/or reports from licensed landfill operators.

Australia’s ageing asbestos legacy is a significant waste management challenge, especially as the only current lawful option is disposal in landfill, of which available space is becoming an increasingly pressing issue.



Launceston Waste Centre and Transfer Station, Tasmania

The future



Under Priority 3 of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan 2024-30 (ANSP) ‘*Safe and effective transport and disposal*’, one of the key actions for all governments is to **Develop a nationally consistent asbestos waste tracking system which integrates with asbestos removal notifications.**

This will enable tracking along the asbestos waste journey from identification to disposal and further improve data collection and accuracy. This in turn would also increase the ability of enforcement agencies to investigate the fate of asbestos waste that does not find its way to a licenced asbestos waste facility. Illegal disposal of asbestos waste is still a big problem for environmental protection agencies, regulators, councils and other land managers, and the community, across Australia.