

REMOVING UP TO 10 SQUARE METRES OF ASBESTOS SHEETING

Bonded materials containing asbestos are the most common asbestos materials in Queensland homes. The products include flat wall and ceiling sheeting ("fibro"), corrugated roofing ("Super 6") and ridge capping, eaves/soffits, fencing, water, drainage and flue pipes, roofing shingles and flexible building boards (eg. *Villaboard*, *Hardiflex*, *Wunderboard* and *Flexiboard*).

Follow the safety procedures below when removing up to 10 square metres of asbestos sheeting.

REMEMBER!

If you are planning to remove 10 square metres or more of asbestos sheeting, you will need to get an asbestos removal certificate. More information is on the Queensland Health web site (www.health.qld.gov.au/asbestos).

WARNING!

It is very dangerous to work on an asbestos roof. Asbestos roofs become very brittle with age and are very slippery when wet. Working at a height also presents a risk of falling. Consider using a business that specialises in removing asbestos roofs.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Asbestos is a hazardous substance.

It is a risk to your health and the health of those around you if asbestos fibres become airborne.

Plan ahead to avoid disturbing materials containing asbestos.

Always prevent creating any dust.

Follow the correct safety procedures.

STEP 1. Get your equipment together

- Suitable asbestos waste containers for the asbestos sheets (eg. a skip lined with two layers 0.2mm plastic sheeting)
- 0.2mm thick plastic sheeting for double wrapping asbestos sheets and as drop sheets
- 0.2mm thick plastic bags no more than 1200mm long and 900mm wide for double bagging asbestos waste
- Spray bottle filled with detergent and water
- Manually controlled, consistent low pressure, coarse spray of water, eg. garden hose with adjustable pistol-grip fitting on the end
- PVA sealant and low pressure spray equipment (for roof sheeting)
- Hammer and punch or chisel (for removal of screws, bolts or similar fittings)
- Oxy-acetylene torch or other suitable device for removing anchoring screws/bolts
- Disposable cleaning rags (eg. paper, cloth)
- Personal protective equipment – P1 or P2 respirator, disposable coveralls, safety goggles and disposal gloves

Warning!

Never use angles grinders or other power tools to remove screws or bolts from asbestos roofing. These actions can release asbestos fibres into the air and are illegal.

STEP 2. Prepare the work area

- Advise your neighbours of what you are planning to do
- Remove all loose and unnecessary items from the work area
- Cover the floor or ground of the work area with plastic sheeting and secure with duct tape or stakes/tent pegs
- Restrict entry to the asbestos work area/s (eg. close doors, put up a barrier)
- Always keep the work area clean, tidy and free from bonded asbestos debris
- Keep asbestos waste separate from all other waste
- Put on your personal protective equipment
- Check the fit of your respirator as per manufacturer's instructions

STEP 3. Removing the bonded asbestos

SAFETY TIPS

- Avoid working in windy environments.
- Asbestos-cement can become brittle with age, so any removal work on roofs must address the risk of falling.
- **Do not** break up the sheeting
- **Do not** use angle grinders or other power tools because of the potential for damage to the asbestos-cement sheeting and subsequent fibre release.
- If there is lichen or moss on roof sheeting, be cautious when using water as wet sheeting is very slippery. Roofing should be sprayed with PVA glue and let dry before sheet removal begins.
- Turn off all electricity in the house to prevent electrocution.

To remove bonded asbestos walls and fencing:	To remove bonded asbestos roofing:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If the asbestos-cement is behind ceramic tiles, remove enough tiles to get access to the fixings of the sheet, taking care not to damage the sheet. Use the chisel to gently tap between the top of the tile and the backing sheet to release the tile. Do not dig the chisel into the backing sheet.2. As the tile is released, spray detergent water lightly behind the tile to prevent release of fibres.3. Cut fixings with a cold chisel under the edge of the sheet, or cut around the head using a punch, again minimising damage to the sheet.4. After spraying with detergent and water, punch any nails through the sheeting to help with removal.5. Remove all nails and asbestos waste from the timber. Remember: keep the asbestos waste wet to control any asbestos fibres getting into the air.6. Remove sheets with as little breakage as possible. <p>Never use ramps, chutes or similar gravity-dependent devices.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Spray asbestos-cement roofing with PVA. The PVA must be dry before sheet removal begins to avoid slipping.2. Remove anchoring screws/bolts from the roofing sheets using an oxy-acetylene torch or another suitable method or device that will not damage the sheet.3. Lower roof sheeting to the ground using slings and/or lifting equipment. <p>Do not throw sheeting to the ground or use chutes.</p> <p>Never break the sheets up into smaller pieces.</p> <p>Do not slide sheeting across other sheets as they may release asbestos fibres.</p>

STEP 4. Clean up

- Wet all asbestos sheets using a fine water spray (including the backs of the sheets once removed)
- Wrap all asbestos sheets in plastic sheeting, seal with duct tape and place in the plastic-lined asbestos waste container or double wrap in plastic sheeting and seal
- Label the packaged waste with an appropriate warning such as:

CAUTION – ASBESTOS
DO NOT DAMAGE OR OPEN
DO NOT INHALE DUST
CANCER AND LUNG DISEASE HAZARD

- Remove larger scraps from floor/ground plastic sheet by hand and place in a disposal bag (only half fill the bag – this is to reduce the chance of the bag splitting)
- Carefully roll or fold plastic sheeting from the floor, so any collected dust or debris does not spill. Lightly spray with water or PVA glue for extra safety

Warning!

Domestic vacuum cleaners are unsuitable and should never be used, even if they have a HEPA filter.

- Use damp rags and/or an approved asbestos vacuum cleaner to clean your equipment and any remaining visibly contaminated sections of the work area (eg. the framework, ceiling spaces and exposed wall cavities). **Note: Rough sawn timber and insulation materials cannot be wet wiped or vacuumed. They should be sealed with pigmented/coloured PVA glue using low-pressure spray.**
- Do not resoak used rags in the bucket, as this will contaminate the water. Either fold the rag and use the clean surface or use a new rag.
- Place asbestos debris, used rags, plastic sheeting and other asbestos waste in disposal bags
- After the work area is clean, wet down your personal protective equipment and clothing with a light spray of water and place them and all used damp cloths into a disposable bag
- Before removing the bags from the work area, wipe external surfaces with damp rags to remove any dust and put the used rags in one of the bags
- Seal all disposal bags with duct tape, place into a second disposal bag and seal again
- Label all bags with an appropriate warning such as:

CAUTION – ASBESTOS
DO NOT DAMAGE OR OPEN BAG
DO NOT INHALE DUST
CANCER AND LUNG DISEASE HAZARD

- Dispose of asbestos waste at the appropriate waste facility (contact your local Council for more information).