Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

We respect their Elders and their continuous connection to Country.

Prioritised Removal

Mel Dennis
Senior Technical Policy Advisor

Asbestos Awareness Week 2024

VICTORIA State Government

Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency

The need for prioritised removal

- Eliminate asbestos-related diseases in Australia
- Asbestos National Strategic Plan, Phase 3 (2024–30) – Priority 2
- Slow removal rate will extend asbestos legacy for generations
- Vic Govt asbestos legacy – 25,000 tonnes (13,132 buildings)

Degrading ACMs

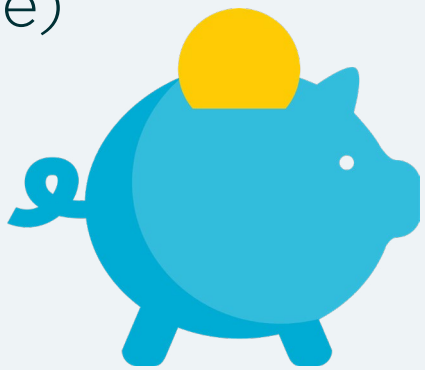
- ACMs degrade as a result of:
  - age
  - human activity (maintenance, accidental disturbances, works)
  - environment (weather, vibration and fallout)
- Greater degradation = higher exposure risk
- Degradation worsens with time = more widespread contamination and remediation costs

What is prioritised removal?

- A shift in thinking from ad hoc or emergency to proactive removal
- Removal is inevitable – ACMs will continue to degrade until they need replacing
- Systematically identifying, scheduling and removing ACMs based on risk
- The most effective way to eliminate the risk of exposure to asbestos

Benefits

- Reduced risk of asbestos-related diseases
- ~20% cost saving between planned and urgent removal
- No ongoing maintenance costs (surveys, inspections, training)
- No emergency removal costs (unexpected disturbance)
- Reduced insurance premium potential
- Reduced risk litigation



Where to start

- Understand your asbestos legacy
- Up-to-date, thorough, high-quality surveys
- A quality asbestos register should contain all necessary information to assess ACM risk

Prioritising based on risk

Removal phase	ACM risk category	ACM description
Phase 1	**Most hazardous**	Friable, poor condition, moderate to high disturbance potential, high-use buildings
Phase 2	**Most hazardous**	Friable, unknown or fair condition, low to moderate disturbance potential, high-use buildings
Phase 3	**May become more hazardous**	Non-friable, fair to stable condition, low to moderate disturbance potential, high-use buildings
Phase 4	**Less hazardous**	Non-friable, well-bonded, stable condition, low to moderate disturbance potential, high-use buildings
Phase 5	**Less hazardous**	Non-friable, well-bonded, stable condition, low disturbance potential, low-use buildings

Additional considerations

- Asbestos registers and management plans
- Building location
- ACM age
- ACMs more likely to be disturbed
- Accessible ACMs
- Source materials of ACM debris

Registers and management plans

- Key information and recommendations
- Promptly act on recommendations

Site name and building address	Building A, 215 Spring St, Melbourne VIC 3000				Survey type/scope	Division 5 Asbestos Survey		Survey conducted by:		Joan Smith – AAA Asbestos Assessments							
Internal / external	Level	Room/area	Location in room/area	ACM product group	ACM product type	ACM name	Sample no. (if applicable)	Sample result	Friability of material	Condition	Disturbance potential	Quantity	Units of measure	Additional comments	Hygienist recommendations	Name of identifying organisation	Date of most recent inspection
Internal	Ground	Store room	Switchboard	Bitumen products	Compressed electrical panels	Switchboard	T1000-007	Positive	Non-friable	Fair	High	1	units	Mounted in metal cabinet. High likelihood of further damage from electrical works.	Product shows signs of damage and should be scheduled for removal by Class A licensed asbestos removalist. Label, incorporate into an asbestos management plan, and monitor condition periodically in the interim.	Test company	5/07/2024
Internal	Ground	Workshop	Walls	Cement products	Flat sheeting	Wall(s)	T1000-008	Negative	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	100	sqm	Painted cream		Test company	5/07/2024
Internal	Ground	Workshop	Floor	Vinyl products	Vinyl tiles	Floor covering	T1000-009	Positive	Non-friable	Good	Moderate	35	sqm	Blue tiles, attached with non-asbestos amber adhesive. Moderate likelihood of damage from equipment movement.	Develop a timetable for removal. Review risk assessment prior to any works in the vicinity. Label, incorporate into an asbestos management plan, and monitor condition periodically in the interim.	Test company	18/05/2023
Internal	Ground	Boiler room	Boiler	Insulation products (f)	Boiler insulation	Boiler	T1000-012	Positive	Friable	Fair	Moderate	3	sqm	Calico wrapping shows signs of deterioration. Moderate likelihood of damage from maintenance works.	Product is showing signs of damage and should be scheduled for removal by a Class A licensed asbestos removalist.	Test company	18/05/2023
Internal	Ground	Boiler room	Boiler	Insulation products (f)	Debris	Boiler	T1000-012	Positive	Friable	Poor	High	1	sqm	The source of this non-fixed or installed ACM is the adjacent boiler. Foot traffic in the area is likely to disturb this asbestos.	Area should be isolated and the debris removed by Class A licensed asbestos removalist as soon as practicable.	Test company	5/07/2024
Internal	Level 1	Throughout	Walls	Cement products	Flat sheeting	Wall(s)	T1000-004	Negative	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	40	sqm	Painted cream		Test company	18/05/2023
Internal	Level 1	Hallway	Floor	Vinyl products	Vinyl tiles	Floor covering	Not Sampled	d Negative	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	N/A (negative)	25	sqm	Beige. New-style, non-asbestos vinyl tiles installed in October 2023.		Test company	5/07/2024
Internal	Level 1	Ceiling space	Ceiling space	Insulation products (f)	Lagging	Pipework insulation	No access	Positive	Friable	Fair	Moderate	6	lm	Access or any work within the roof cavity may cause damage. Likely to deteriorate over time.	Roof cavity is inaccessible, but visual evidence that boiler pipework extends into the ceiling cavity and is likely to be insulated with asbestos pipe lagging. Investigate and review risk assessment before any work in the ceiling cavity. Install warning signage and incorporate area into an asbestos management plan.	Test company	18/05/2023

Building location

- Severe weather conditions can lead to substantial damage of ACMs and widespread contamination
- Target areas prone to:
  - bushfire
  - storms
  - floods
  - heavy rain

ACM age

/ Some products have exceeded their product lifespan

Corrugated roof sheeting

Vinyl flooring (tiles and sheeting)

ACMs likely to be disturbed

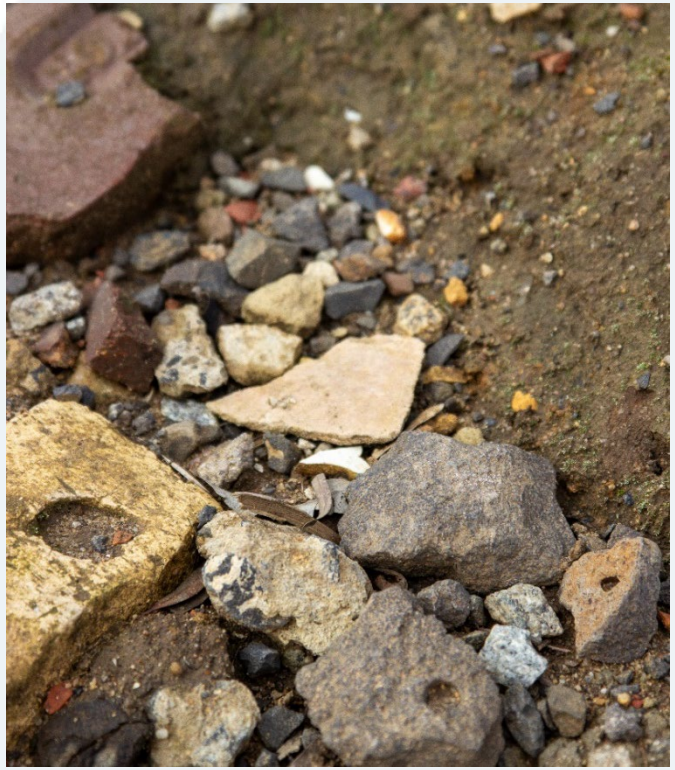
- Electrical switchboards and associated ACMs (switchboard linings, fuses, millboard) are often disturbed during maintenance and upgrades

Accessible ACMs

- Mobilising asbestos removalists can be expensive
- Maximise efficiency by removing all accessible ACMs during high-priority removals

ACM debris and source material

- Prioritise ACM debris for removal
- Remove source material simultaneously to prevent further debris, e.g.:
  - Cement sheet debris on the ground around a building and damaged cement sheet eaves



What you can start doing now

/ Review asbestos registers and asbestos management plans

/ Budget for asbestos removal as part of standard operation

/ Set an end date for the removal of ACMs

/ Prepare a prioritised removal plan

/ Implement the prioritised removal of asbestos

Contact

215 Spring Street Melbourne VIC 3000

03 9214 7100 / vaea.vic.gov.au / info@vaea.vic.gov.au