

September 2026

WorkSafe New Zealand is providing this information in relation to the presence of asbestos in certain fire safety doors.

WorkSafe was notified of a potential health risk involving imported materials, which may contain asbestos, used in the production of fire safety doors.

Background

In response, we commenced a targeted health and safety response in parallel with a cross-agency response being coordinated by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). WorkSafe inspectors initially conducted urgent assessments at relevant affected manufacturers – one of which was Pacific Door Systems Ltd (PDS). As a result, PDS sites in Wellington and Timaru were closed temporarily while they safely removed any asbestos-containing material. Both sites have since received independent clearance certificates and been deemed safe for workers to return.

Since then, we have conducted a number of site visits with different companies where we have been notified of similar concerns.

Note: WorkSafe has been made aware of a Brisbane-based company, Firemex, that has supplied asbestos-contaminated fire doors directly into New Zealand. We are also looking into reports of further suppliers of asbestos-containing materials relating to fire safety doors. We are engaging with relevant parties and MBIE to ensure we give them health and safety advice.

As the work health and safety regulator, WorkSafe's role is to influence businesses and workers to ensure their work is healthy and safe. We also work with businesses and organisations to ensure they understand their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and, in this context, relevant asbestos regulations.

Following our initial health and safety response, WorkSafe is providing the following information for businesses on safe practices for identifying, installing, and disposal of asbestos, along with health advice for organisations and individuals concerned about potential exposure.

Since first publishing this advice pack in September 2025, there have been several updates as new information has been provided. Details of each update can be found at the end of this document.

You can also refer to our Q&As on this issue. If you have further questions relating to this issue, please contact technical@worksafe.govt.nz

To notify us of any unsafe work, please reach out via [Notify WorkSafe](#) on our website, email HandSconcerns@worksafe.govt.nz or call **0800 030 040**.

WorkSafe position on further sampling/testing on fire doors

Polarised Light Microscopy with Dispersion Staining (PLM/DS), supplemented in some cases with enhanced analytical testing (in particular Transmission Electron Microscopy with Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy and Selected Area Electron Diffraction (TEM/EDS/SAED)), has confirmed the presence of asbestos in the FRB core board used in certain fire doors.

Given the critical role these doors play in passive fire protection, WorkSafe continues to advise against further sampling of fully installed fire doors. This is to avoid any risk that invasive sampling could compromise the fire integrity of the doors and introduce unnecessary health and safety risks.

Operating premises where these doors are already installed and not already confirmed to be free of asbestos through appropriate sampling and testing must continue to manage them on the basis that asbestos may be present. Asbestos registers and asbestos management plans must be updated where required or created for newer build projects or where asbestos was not previously identified.

Where sampling is undertaken, WorkSafe recommends that the sampling is undertaken by a competent person having regard to product design (both fire door and hardware installed), compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, and applicable codes and industry standards.

Further, that the PCBU selects an analytical methodology that takes into account the known limitations of the method, the characteristics of the material being tested, and the level of analytical confidence required for the intended decision-making purpose.

Polarised Light Microscopy (PLM) analysis, undertaken in accordance with Australian analytical standards AS 4964 or AS 5370, is widely used for the baseline qualitative identification of asbestos in bulk materials, however, these methods include reporting limits which prevent reporting on asbestos presence within the sampled material where asbestos is present at very low concentrations or as very fine fibres.

Results reported under these analytical standards as Unidentified Mineral Fibre (UMF) neither confirm the presence of asbestos nor equate to a 'no asbestos detected' result. Accordingly, where the presumption of asbestos already applied to the relevant door, that presumption will continue to apply in the context of a UMF result unless the relevant door is subjected to further analysis using advanced analytical techniques.

Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM), incorporating Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS) and Selected Area Electron Diffraction (SAED), provides a higher level of analytical sensitivity and specificity for low-concentration materials and enables definitive

identification of asbestos through the combined assessment of fibre morphology, elemental composition and crystal structure at the individual-fibre level.

Where a higher level of analytical confidence is required by the PCBU for the purpose of their decision-making, or where the outcomes of the baseline identification methods are ambiguous or inconsistent, more advanced analytical techniques are to be considered.

Pacific Door Systems developed methodology

Pacific Door Systems has developed methodology relating to the sampling and testing of its products. Enquiries regarding that information should be directed to Pacific Door Systems. WorkSafe was made aware of the methodology during its development. However, the methodology was developed independently of WorkSafe, and WorkSafe as a regulator does not endorse, approve, maintain, or publish it. Accordingly, any reference to it must not be interpreted as regulatory approval, endorsement, validation or acceptance of the methodology described. As a PCBU with relevant duties in this area, responsibility for the technical content and the reliability of that methodology rests with Pacific Door Systems.

Duty holders remain responsible for determining whether the selected testing methodology is appropriate for their particular circumstances and for ensuring compliance with their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016.

Identification, installation and disposal of fire safety doors

- **Product identification:** until further notice, fire doors supplied by Pacific Doors and listed on [MBIE's Product Recall page](#) must be presumed to contain asbestos. The potentially affected product range is wider than the products covered by the voluntary recall. The voluntary recall applies only to specified uninstalled and partially installed fire doors. Doors, panels and hatches that are already fully installed and in use are not subject to the voluntary recall, but may still fall within the potentially affected product range and need to be managed on the presumption that asbestos is present. Contact Pacific Doors for further details regarding product identification at this time.
- Certain fire doors supplied by Firemex are presumed to have asbestos in the core unless confirmed otherwise. If you have received potentially affected products during this period, contact Firemex for further details regarding product identification and take note of this advice pack. Information relating to the affected Firemex doors can also be found on [MBIE's Product Recall page](#)

- **Installation prohibition:** further installation of these fire doors, including hardware fitting, is strictly prohibited under Regulation 7 of the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016.
- **Risk assessment:** If fire doors remain intact, they pose negligible to no risk of asbestos exposure. However, if the door is designed and installed in a way that exposes the fire door core, or if the damage to the door is more than cosmetic wear (for example, not just bumps and scratches) and exposes the fire door core, immediate remediation must be undertaken in accordance with your organisation's Asbestos Management Plan (AMP).
- **Installed doors:** All premises with these doors installed must adopt a blanket presumption of asbestos presence for risk management purposes. Asbestos registers and AMPs must be updated or created for premises that previously had no asbestos present.
- **Uninstalled stock:** Any uninstalled fire doors from this supply period must be quarantined and disposed of as asbestos waste, in line with your organisation's AMP
- **Voluntary recall:** MBIE has advised that PDS and Firemex have issued a voluntary recall of potentially asbestos impacted fire doors – further information is on the [MBIE website](#)

Other responsibilities

Building owners and construction companies that have been supplied with fire doors that may be affected must understand and comply with the different requirements of the relevant legislation and applicable regulations, including:

- Building Act 2004
- New Zealand Building Code
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and
- Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016.

Compliance guidance

Information on compliance with the Building Act can be accessed via the link to the MBIE website below. It has a very different intent to the WorkSafe advice pack and will help building owners understand how to comply with the requirements of the Building Act, if the building contains potentially affected fire doors.

[Fire doors containing asbestos-impacted fire-retardant board](#)

Health advice

Organisations and individuals concerned about potential asbestos exposure should consult an Occupational Medicine Physician or equivalent specialist. These professionals are best equipped to assess, educate, and support workers who may have been exposed to asbestos-related health risks.

For further guidance, we recommend the following resources:

- Occupational Medicine Experts
[Work & Health – New Zealand](#)
- Find an Occupational Health & Wellbeing Professional – [Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine](#)
- [Exposure monitoring and health monitoring – guidance for businesses](#)

Q&A

Is the asbestos containing material within the affected doors considered to be friable (Class A) or Non-Friable (Class B)?

The core board in these fire doors is friable, which means these materials can easily crumble and release dangerous airborne fibres. Provided that no core board is exposed, the affected doors can be removed under Class B controls by a Class A asbestos removalist.

Doors that are damaged with the core board potentially or actually exposed must be removed under Class A controls by Class A asbestos removalist.

WorkSafe recommends consulting a licenced asbestos assessor who can determine the appropriate class of asbestos removal before any removal work is done.

If the doors are to be removed intact, with all installed hardware still attached, clearly labelled and disposed of as asbestos waste, does this need to be done by a licensed asbestos removalist?

Yes. A licensed asbestos removalist must carry out the work if **five or more doors are to be removed cumulatively across the site.**

If four or fewer doors are being removed (equivalent to 10 m² of asbestos containing material), this work can be done by a competent person trained in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016.

Dividing the removal work across the site into smaller projects of four or fewer doors to circumvent regulations is prohibited.

Should WorkSafe be notified before the removal process begins?

Yes. WorkSafe should be notified five days before starting the removal process if five or more doors will be removed from the site.

WorkSafe doesn't have to be notified if four or fewer doors are to be removed during the entire process.

Dividing the removal work into smaller projects of four or fewer doors to circumvent regulations and to avoid notifying WorkSafe is prohibited.

Are the doors required to be wrapped in 200µm polyethylene for disposal, and labelled as containing asbestos?

Yes. All regulatory requirements for handling asbestos waste – including sealing, marking and disposal – apply when removing the affected doors.

Can maintenance work be carried out on the installed affected fire doors?

Yes. Maintenance work for affected doors that have been fully installed can be done. This work could be on damage to the door itself, or the hardware fitted to the door. The work should incorporate the necessary controls as per the building's asbestos management plan, taking into consideration the requirements under regulations 47–53 of the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations. This work should be fully assessed and carried out by a person competent with this type of asbestos-related work and the necessary Class A controls.

Is it OK to reuse hardware on the affected doors being removed and disposed of?

Yes. The hardware on affected doors being removed for disposal can be reused. Hardware removal must be carried out by a Class A licensed asbestos removalist. Additionally, a licensed asbestos assessor must conduct a clearance inspection of both the removal area and any hardware intended for reuse. All work must comply with the requirements set out under regulations 27–46 of the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations.

Document updates

Updated 23 September 2025 based on latest information.

Updated 12 September to clarify the inclusive date.

Updated 30 September to cover situations when fire door core is exposed.

Added *Other responsibilities* and *Compliance guidance* on 17 November 2025.

Additional Q&As added on 4 November 2025.

Updated WorkSafe position on further sampling/testing on fire doors on 16 September 2026.