



Asbestos information for plumbers

Asbestos can be found in many homes, workplaces, and buildings in Aotearoa New Zealand. Exposure to asbestos can cause serious health problems including lung cancer.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a mineral made up of tiny fibres and used in building materials. When asbestos is disturbed or breaks down, asbestos fibres can be released into the air.

When asbestos fibres are in the air, they can be breathed in. Breathing in asbestos fibres can cause them to get trapped in your lungs, leading to serious health issues including lung cancer.

Asbestos fibres in the air are too small to be seen with the naked eye. Even if you cannot see any dust particles in the air, asbestos fibres may still be present.

What is the risk for plumbers?

Every tradesperson is likely to come into contact with asbestos at work at some point. In Aotearoa, more than 200 people die each year from diseases caused by asbestos. Plumbers are at risk of exposure to asbestos fibres in the air because they often work with or around materials that contain asbestos.

REMEMBER

If you are not sure if something contains asbestos, treat it like it is asbestos and stop work. Get it tested to make sure it is not asbestos before resuming work. If it is asbestos, depending on what work you have planned (such as refurbishment or demolition) it may have to be removed by an asbestos removal specialist before you can resume work. Scan the QR code to get more information.

If you find or suspect asbestos



Stop what you are doing



Do not disturb the asbestos material



Contact your supervisor, site manager, or an asbestos specialist

Places where asbestos is often found



Asbestos insulating board (AIB) behind radiator unit
Often used near, in or behind radiators due to its thermal insulator properties



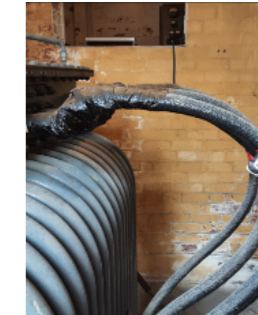
Asbestos insulating board (AIB) behind radiator unit
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Asbestos insulation in poor condition to pipework
This will likely release fibres when disturbed



Insulation in poor condition to pipework
Shows water damage to pipe and dried leak deposits in insulation



Bituminous pipe wrap
Insulating pipe work



Putty to waste pipe
Putty around pipe joint



Asbestos paper wrapping to pipework



Raw asbestos used with plaster as a gap filler



Sprayed coating overspray
Overspray from asbestos coating



Sprayed insulation



Fragment of asbestos cement pipe and buried cement pipe



Fragment of asbestos cement pipe and buried cement pipe

If you disturb asbestos



Stop what you are doing



Keep people away from the area



Leave the area



Minimise the spread of fibres



Contact your supervisor, site manager, or an asbestos specialist



Carefully remove and double bag contaminated clothing

More information

Scan the QR code for more information about asbestos.

