

Asbestos Management for Residents – Seroja Cleanup

This document provides information on the safe management of asbestos damaged during cyclone Seroja. Note that this procedure is only applicable for the handling of asbestos broken during the cyclone event and not to normal asbestos replacement and removal.

The cyclone may have damaged asbestos on your property. This will mostly be in the form of broken pieces of asbestos sheeting (e.g. fences, roofs, walls, eaves). Although the asbestos material is damaged, the asbestos in these broken sheets should still be 'bonded'. That is, the fibres will be held together in the cement matrix, so they won't be easily released. **Therefore, they present a very low risk for exposure unless you start to break them further.**

Anyone handling asbestos must take precautions to protect themselves against dust by not breaking-up and spreading asbestos material when cleaning up any asbestos roof or wall sheets or fencing panels.

If you want to clean-up and remove the bonded asbestos sheets and fragments on your property resulting from the storm event, you can do this by contracting an asbestos removal professional or do it yourself by following the precautions below. **If the asbestos can be easily broken when you touch you need to leave it alone. This means it is becoming friable and will require specialist removalists.**

Also, if you are not sure whether the material contains asbestos, treat it as though it does.

Reasonable measures for cleaning bonded asbestos sheets and fragments:

Where significant damage has occurred to a structure resulting in large amounts of asbestos containing material on a site, a professional asbestos removalist will need to be engaged to assess and remediate to ensure asbestos containing material has been removed even for those properties where the owners may have acted on their own.

If you decide to undertake a clean up of smaller amounts of asbestos material from your property;

1. Make sure you are wearing adequate personal protective clothing. This includes;
 - P2 or N95 mask
 - Disposable coveralls – if available or old clothes that can be disposed later
 - Gloves
 - Disposable shoe covers – if available or hard cover shoes that can be cleaned.
2. Do not break or crush the asbestos when you are moving it.
3. Never use power tools on asbestos material.
4. If the material is drying out, keep it wet by lightly hosing with water before moving it.
5. Carefully place the asbestos material in 200um plastic bags (heavy duty) or wrap using rolls of 200um plastic.
6. If you are placing the asbestos in plastic bags, they should NOT be more than half full. Tightly twist the bag opening and fold over to form a goose neck and secure with heavy duty duct. Finally place that bag inside another one (double bag), seal and label 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'.
7. If you are using rolls of black plastic, make sure you only wrap the equivalent of a single fence sheet for each wrapping. Double wrap, seal with duct tape and label 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'.
8. If pallets are being used for collection and transfer, several asbestos sheets or smaller bags may be wrapped at one time. Once sufficient sheets have been stacked, double wrap the load, seal it with duct tape and label 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'.
9. Contact the Shire on 9971 1204 for advice on the correct disposal of the wrapped material. **NOTE that asbestos containing material must not be delivered to the landfill without the Shire's knowledge.**

Cleaning up storm and wind damage asbestos video

It is essential to protect yourself and others when removing storm debris, particularly when asbestos is concerned. The following procedure will help you to safely clean-up asbestos after a storm. This video is courtesy of the Queensland Government. https://youtu.be/zuaG_wDKV00

All enquiries about asbestos clean-up should be directed to the Shire on 9971 1204.