

ASBESTOS ALERT

Stop, Think Asbestos. Seek Advice Information for Public housing tenants

Asbestos has been in the news lately. You have probably heard about some problems which asbestos might cause to you and your family.

This fact sheet has been written to keep public housing tenants informed about asbestos.

What is asbestos?

It is a naturally occurring mineral. When processed into fibres, asbestos has been used for insulation and building products.

It has mostly been used in the form of asbestos cement sheeting.

How could asbestos affect me?

If you breathe in loose asbestos fibres it may lead to diseases such as asbestosis or lung cancer.

Asbestos related diseases however, are normally only found in people who have worked for many years in very dusty atmospheres such as mines and factories.

If asbestos is contained in a product such as asbestos cement sheeting and it is not damaged, the risks to

your health are negligible, if the sheeting is damaged, loose asbestos fibres may get into the air, although any risk is very small.

Is there asbestos in my house?

Asbestos was used in Australia mainly from 1959 to 1976, but it was still used in buildings as asbestos cement sheeting, corrugated asbestos cement roofing, asbestos cement pipes and asbestos felts until the 1980's.

Territory Housing does not have any of the most dangerous type of asbestos (which was a fibre mainly found in lagging around pipes) in its homes but there may be some other types of asbestos cement sheeting on walls, eaves or roofs.

If the asbestos cement sheeting in your home is not damaged, you do not need to worry about it.

What should I do if there is damaged asbestos cement sheeting in my home?

If it is damaged you should call your local Territory Housing Office or check the asbestos website www.asbestos.nt.gov.au

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Territory Housing will inspect your home as soon as possible if it appears that there might be any risk.

If there is any danger to your health the asbestos will be treated by a specialist organised by Territory Housing.

My house is clad with asbestos cement sheeting. Is that dangerous?

Again, if the asbestos is not damaged, the risk is minimal, but if you are concerned, please contact Territory Housing or check the asbestos website www.asbestos.nt.gov.au.

What if the walls are knocked by a cricket ball or by children playing?

If the wall is not broken you do not have to do anything.

If there is a hole in the wall, contact Territory Housing.

What about drilling asbestos sheets or hammering in nails?

You must not use power tools or wire brushes or do any work that makes dust such as sanding the asbestos cement sheeting.

Ordinary hand tools used correctly and ensuring it is wet down will not create any extra risk and neither will hammering nails or screwing hooks.

If you are unsure whether what you want to do might be dangerous please phone the Asbestos Information Line on 1800 019 115.

Territory Housing Property Manager Offices:

Casuarina, Ethos House
8922 5533

Darwin, Construction House
8999 8373

Palmerston, Highway House
8999 4765

Alice Springs, Cnr Leichhardt
& Gregory Tce
8951 5503

Tennant Creek, Government Building
8962 4558

Katherine, NT Government Centre
8973 8476

Nhulunbuy, Shop 2, Arnhem House
8999 8408