

SESLHD PROCEDURE COVER SHEET



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District

NAME OF DOCUMENT	Asbestos Risk Management
TYPE OF DOCUMENT	Procedure
DOCUMENT NUMBER	SESLHDPR/314
DATE OF PUBLICATION	June 2024
RISK RATING	Low
LEVEL OF EVIDENCE	National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards: Standard 1 – Clinical Governance Code of Practice - How to Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace (2011) ISO 48001:2018 Occupational Health & Safety Management System NSW Health - Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures PD2018_013
REVIEW DATE	June 2029
FORMER REFERENCE(S)	N/A
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FUNCTIONAL GROUP(S)	Workplace Health and Safety
KEY TERMS	Asbestos Management, Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM)
SUMMARY	To inform managers and workers on the requirements to identify and manage the risks associated with asbestos.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) acknowledges that due to the age of its facilities, some of the structures on its sites are likely to contain asbestos or asbestos containing materials (ACM). SESLHD has an obligation to ensure that all asbestos and ACM are managed in accordance with legislative requirements and are committed to:

- The identification and management of asbestos and asbestos containing material (ACM) so as to eliminate or minimise exposure
- Providing relevant information and consultation with workers on asbestos related matters and
- Ensuring that any asbestos removed from any facility is disposed of safely and in accordance with legislative requirements.

2. BACKGROUND

Asbestos is a general term that covers the varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine and amphibole groups, with the most common types being crocidolite (blue asbestos), amosite (brown or grey asbestos) and chrysotile (white asbestos).

Asbestos and asbestos containing materials (ACM) were used in a variety of domestic and commercial applications from the 1950s up until the mid-1980s. On 31 December 2003, the complete ban of the importation, manufacturing and use of asbestos and ACM came into force.

Asbestos material in a bonded form does not present an immediate health risk, if it remains undisturbed and in good condition. It is the inhalation of asbestos fibres or dusts generated by disturbing bonded material that may lead to the risk of asbestos related disease.

3. DEFINITIONS

Refer to Appendix 1 - Definitions

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Senior Managers will:

Establish and maintain Health Safety and Wellbeing procedures to meet the WHS objectives by ensuring that:

- buildings and or plant/equipment under their control which contain asbestos are identified and included in the asbestos register
- any suspected ACM is assessed by qualified consultants and results entered into the asbestos register
- copies of the asbestos register are provided to any contractor that may conduct work in areas which contain asbestos
- regular inspections and monitoring is conducted for identified asbestos areas/equipment within their responsibility

- appropriate procedures are developed and communicated if there is a requirement for asbestos removal within their area of responsibility
- appropriate asbestos hazard control methods are implemented for the removal of asbestos where appropriate, including training and personal protective equipment and
- the management of contractors in relation to ACM hazards and ensuring the contractors' proposed work methods do not place workers, contractors, or visitors at risk.

4.2 Line Managers will:

Implement and comply with Health Safety and Wellbeing procedures to meet the WHS policy objectives by ensuring that:

- buildings and or plant/equipment under their control which contain asbestos are identified and included in the asbestos register
- any suspected ACM is assessed by qualified consultants and results entered into the asbestos register
- copies of the asbestos register are provided to any contractor that may conduct work in areas which contain asbestos
- regular inspections and monitoring are conducted for identified asbestos areas/equipment within their responsibility
- any asbestos related hazards and incidents are reported in the SESLHD safety incident reporting system, iMS+.

4.3 Workers will:

Ensure that they:

- do not place themselves or other workers at risk of injury
- follow all related procedures and instructions
- complete any training and PPE requirements
- report any asbestos related hazards and incidents in the SESLHD safety incident reporting system, iMS+.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 General Principles

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) minimises the risks of asbestos to SESLHD workers and visitors by:

- Providing nationally recognised Asbestos Awareness training through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to all Engineering workers
- Outsourcing asbestos removal to a competent person who has received nationally recognised training and is certified to remove asbestos
- Periodically engaging a competent person to conduct a survey of all sites and facilities. The competent person will provide a report which will form the basis of each Facility's Asbestos Register and Management Plan.
- Each Facility must maintain an up-to-date Asbestos Register and develop and comply with their Asbestos Management Plan.

5.2 Consultation

Consultation with workers occurs throughout the survey process, and includes information sharing. The process includes identification and inspection, evaluation and control outcomes.

5.3 Identification and inspection

In conjunction with SESLHD Facilities Management, each SESLHD Facility must ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all asbestos or ACM at the workplace is identified and inspected by a competent person or assume the presence of asbestos or ACM.

An inspection of the Facility for asbestos and ACM by a competent person must occur:

- at least every five years, or
- before any work affecting the asbestos management plan is undertaken, or
- when any disturbance of the environment or buildings uncovers potentially or previously unidentified asbestos or ACM.

5.4 Assessment

All buildings and structures constructed and/or refurbished prior to December 2003 are assessed by the competent person. The assessment report includes the following:

- the sources of asbestos and ACM
- the condition of the asbestos or ACM
- the likelihood of exposure and potential health risks
- the nature and location of any work that may be carried out that would disturb the asbestos or ACM

5.5 Register

An asbestos register as described in the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017* (NSW) is to be maintained by a designated responsible person at each SESLHD Facility and includes the following mandatory requirements as a minimum:

- the date the register was last reviewed and/or updated by a competent person
- the type of material, including a sufficient description for identification
- the condition of the material
- the location of all asbestos and asbestos-containing material.
- The Facility is to ensure the register is accessible to the workers at the site.

5.6 Revision of the Asbestos Register

The register is reviewed at least once every five years by the competent person. The competent person conducts a visual inspection of the asbestos and ACM listed within the register to determine its condition and to revise the asbestos register as appropriate.

An update of the asbestos register is also required:

- if more asbestos is identified on the site
- after work affecting the asbestos management plan has been undertaken
- after completing demolition or refurbishment works where asbestos has been removed as part of the project.

5.7 Management Plan

The Asbestos Management Plan documents the Facility's responsible persons and arrangements for:

- engaging the competent person
- the frequency of visual inspections
- conducting the risk assessment
- implementing appropriate control measures based on the risk assessment
- labelling of all identifiable asbestos or ACM and recording the findings in the register
- signage and placarding of areas where asbestos or ACM are identified
- ensuring adequate consultation is included in each part of the asbestos management plan
- the removal of asbestos or ACM
- assessment prior to commencing demolition or refurbishment works.

The management plan is reviewed at least every five years.

5.8 Control indicators for asbestos containing materials

The following hierarchy of controls will aid the control of identified asbestos containing materials:

1. Elimination or removal
2. Substitution
3. Isolation, enclosure or sealing
4. Engineering controls
5. Safe work practices (administrative controls)
6. Personal protective equipment (least preferred).

A combination of the above controls may be utilised. The general principles for controlling asbestos are:

Remove:	Unstable asbestos or ACM that is prone to damage (this must only be done by a licenced, qualified and competently trained person).
Enclose:	Stable asbestos or ACM that may be prone to damage and where encapsulation or sealing does not provide sufficient protection or may disturb asbestos fibres. May be suitable if removal is not a viable option.
Encapsulate/Seal:	Stable asbestos or ACM that may be prone to damage and require protection of exposed surfaces. Not to be used if the surface coating will create significant disturbance of asbestos fibres.
Leave and maintain:	Stable asbestos or ACM that is not prone to damage.

The goal when controlling asbestos is firstly to remove it. Where this is not reasonably practicable and the risk assessment determines that it cannot be left as is, lower order

controls such as enclosure or encapsulation are implemented.

However, it is important that the short and long term costs of control are considered before a control measure is implemented. For example, enclosure of friable asbestos in concrete will, in the short term, control the risk of exposure to asbestos but will, in the long term, incur additional costs as when it is finally removed the concrete as well as the friable asbestos will need to be disposed of by a licensed asbestos contractor.

5.9 Information, Instruction and Training

5.9.1 SESLHD Workers

10675NAT Asbestos Awareness training is provided by a certified RTO to all SESLHD Engineering workers who may come into contact with Asbestos.

5.9.2 Asbestos Removal Contractors

Contractors engaged by SESLHD to remove Asbestos have completed the relevant Asbestos Removal Training, provided by an RTO:

- Remove non-friable asbestos (Class B) CPCCE3014A
- Supervise asbestos removal CPCBC4051A
- Conduct Asbestos Assessment Assoc. Removal CPCBC5014A
- Remove Friable Asbestos CPCCE3015A.

5.10 Potentially Hazardous Processes

There are a variety of maintenance and service work processes that have the potential to disturb asbestos containing materials. These include any process that is likely release asbestos fibres such as:

- Removal of asbestos or ACM
- Drilling of asbestos or ACM
- Sealing, painting and cleaning asbestos cement products
- Cleaning gutters on asbestos cement roofs
- Handling asbestos cement conduits or boxes
- Working on electrical mounting boards containing asbestos.

Consultation of the asbestos register is required prior to commencing any work in areas where asbestos or ACM are known or suspected (e.g. buildings constructed before 31 Dec 2003). The SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace includes a recommendation of a permit-to-work system and appendices detailing specific safe work practices for working with asbestos. The SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – How to safely remove asbestos includes detail of the licensing requirements for workers engaged in removing asbestos.

5.11 Exposure Monitoring

If respirable airborne fibres are suspected or identified, air monitoring may be required. This requires consultation with a competent person who may request an Occupational Hygienist or Licensed Asbestos Assessor to take a sample measurement of the air quality within the workers' breathing zone. This sample is sent for analysis by an approved laboratory to assess the sample against the exposure standard. The result may require (as guided by the hygienist or competent person) the use of PPE including

respiratory protective equipment. Where necessary, work may be stopped to assess and mitigate the cause of the airborne asbestos level before continuing on.

5.12 What to do if a worker may have been exposed to asbestos

If a worker thinks they may have been exposed to asbestos do the following:

- Stop work immediately
- Immediately report the incident to your manager
- The Manager will contact HSW Partner at the facility/directorate
- Minimise disturbance of the material and area
- Inform other workers to prevent access until the hazard has been contained
- Set up an exclusion zone using barricades and warning signs restricting access to the contaminated area

The Health Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Team, in collaboration with the Facilities Management team will do the following:

- Consult a licensed asbestos assessor to provide immediate advice on making the area safe. Advice on decontamination and disposal of clothing (as asbestos waste) should also be obtained.
- **Contact SafeWork NSW on 13 10 50 to report the incident.**
- Contact a licensed asbestos professional to undertake removal works at contaminated area
- Health monitoring must be undertaken or supervised by a registered medical practitioner experienced in health monitoring as soon as practical after the exposure.
- Register the details on the National Asbestos Exposure Register.

If test results suggest workers have contracted disease related to asbestos exposure, SafeWork NSW is notified. A report of the action the PCBU has taken in response to the findings is also supplied to SafeWork NSW.

5.13 Warning Signs and Labels

All warning signs and labels must comply with AS1319 – “Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment.”

Examples of signs and labels are included in the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice – “How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace”, refer Appendix B. The wording may vary in accordance with AS1319:1994 – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment. The positioning of these must be determined by the competent person and adhere with the asbestos management plan, and placed in positions that provide the necessary identification and information required to prevent inadvertent disruption to the asbestos or ACM. E.g., at access points to ceilings or next to valves where asbestos has been used as pipe lagging.

5.14 Health Surveillance

Any exposure or potential exposure is reported in IMS+ and an injury notification form. For individuals who have been potentially exposed, SESLHD will arrange for an appropriate personal health surveillance where required, which usually includes a chest

x-ray. Detail of any potential exposures will be kept on workers' personal staff records. Workers who have been exposed must be registered with the NSW Asbestos Register within three months of the exposure.

The facility also maintains a register in TRIM of people who are known to have been exposed to asbestos. This register includes:

- Name of exposed worker
- Staff number
- Details of the exposure
- Date of the exposure
- Date of the investigation.

For further information please refer to [SESLHDPR/378 - Work Health and Safety – Health Monitoring for Occupational Health Exposures other than Infectious Diseases Procedure](#)

5.15 Facility Contacts/Responsible Persons

Further information on Facility Asbestos Registers and Management Plans can be obtained by contacting the following responsible persons:

- Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital – Assistant Engineer
- Prince of Wales Hospital and Royal Hospital for Women – Chief Engineer
- St George Hospital – Engineering Manager
- The Sutherland Hospital – Maintenance Manager
- Garrawarra Centre – Business Quality Manager
- War Memorial Hospital – WHS Coordinator and Maintenance Manager
- Calvary Health Care – Manager Corporate Governance and Compliance
- Facility and SESLHD Health Safety and Wellbeing Team.

5.16 RECORDS and DOCUMENTATION

Records are kept of any work performed on asbestos or ACM and includes the following:

- Details and scope of the work performed
- Names of those performing the work
- Date or dates of the work
- Copies of any clearance certificates or permits
- Records of visual inspections
- Copies of all disposal receipts.

The following documents are also required at sites with asbestos and sites where there is a possibility that asbestos is present:

- Site asbestos audit
- Site asbestos register
- Site asbestos management plan
- Asbestos monitoring
- Clearance certificate.

Health surveillance records for workers are maintained in Content Manager and kept for a period of 40 years. The worker is also be provided with a copy.

All other asbestos records are maintained and retained for at least 5 years, or if a notifiable incident has occurred for 40 years.

6. AUDIT

Scheduled Site Asbestos Audits
Health Safety and Wellbeing WHS Audits
Accreditation to the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

7. REFERENCES

External

- AS1319:1994 – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment
- [SafeWork NSW, 2022. Code of Practice - How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace](#)
- [SafeWork NSW, 2022. Code of Practice - How to Safely Remove Asbestos](#)
- [Work Health Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Work Health Safety Regulations 2017 \(NSW\)](#)

Internal

- [Appendix 1 – Definitions](#)
- [NSW Health Policy Directive PD2023_010 - Work Health and Safety Audits](#)
- [NSW Health Policy Directive PD2018_013 - Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures](#)
- [SESLHDPR/378 - Health Monitoring for Occupational Health Exposures other than Infectious Diseases](#)

8. VERSION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version	Version and approval notes
Aug 12	0	Manager Workforce Safety Injury Management Peggy Pollock
Nov 2013	1	Revised by Peter Kuszelyk, WHS Consultant, Health Safety & Wellbeing. Re-formatted by Scarlett Acevedo, District Policy Officer.
Jan 2015	2	Revised by Ron Taylor, WHS Consultant and Peggy Pollock, Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing
July 2015	3	Reviewed and endorsed by Executive Sponsor
August 2017	4	Desktop Revision and Links Update - John Parkinson, WHS Consultant
October 2017	4	Updates endorsed by Executive Sponsor
August 2018	5	Document title changed – Catherine Johnson, WHS Consultant
December 2019	6	Updated links.

		Updated Executive sponsor, Position responsible for document and Author of document.
June 2020	7	Revised and Updated – Jen Hartley and Emma Huang Health Safety Wellbeing Advisors
December 2021	8	Minor review. Reformatted and additional responsibilities added.
January 2022	8	Approved by Executive Sponsor.
12 June 2024	9	Minor review: reformatted and additional responsibilities added. Review completed by Vee-Lyn Tan & Vanessa Madunic. Approved by Executive Sponsor.

Appendix 1 - Definitions

Key Term	Definition
Airborne Asbestos	Any fibres of asbestos small enough to be made airborne. For the purposes of monitoring airborne asbestos fibres, only respirable fibres are counted.
Asbestos	The asbestiform varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock-forming minerals, including actinolite asbestos, grunerite (or amosite) asbestos (brown), anthophyllite asbestos, chrysotile asbestos (white), crocidolite asbestos (blue) and tremolite asbestos, or a mixture that contains one or more of these.
Asbestos Containing Material (ACM)	Any material or thing that, as part of its design, contains asbestos.
Asbestos - Contaminated Dust or Debris (ACD)	Dust or debris that has settled within a workplace and is (or is assumed to be) contaminated with asbestos.
Asbestos-Related Work	Work involving asbestos (other than asbestos removal work to which Part 8.7 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017</i> (NSW) applies) that is permitted under the exceptions set out in clause 419(3), (4) and (5).
Asbestos Removalist	A person conducting a business or undertaking who carries out asbestos removal work.
Asbestos Removal Work	Work involving the removal of asbestos or ACM. Class A asbestos removal work or Class B asbestos removal work as outlined in Part 8.10 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017</i> (NSW).
Competent Person	In relation to carrying out clearance inspections under WHS Regulation clause 473—a person who has acquired through training or experience the knowledge and skills of relevant asbestos removal industry practice and holds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a certification in relation to the specified VET course for asbestos assessor work, or – a tertiary qualification in occupational health and safety, occupational hygiene, science, building, construction or environmental health. For all other purposes—a person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
Duty Holder	Any person who owes a work health and safety duty under the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (NSW) including a person conducting a business or undertaking, a designer, manufacturer, importer, supplier, installer of products or plant used at work How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace Code of Practice Page 52 of 82 Key terms Meaning (upstream), officer or a worker.

Key Term	Definition
Exposure Standard	For asbestos is a respirable fibre level of 0.1 fibres/mL of air measured in a person’s breathing zone and expressed as a time- weighted average fibre concentration calculated over an eight-hour working day and measured over a minimum period of four hours in accordance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the Membrane Filter Method – a method determined by the relevant regulator.
Friable Asbestos	Material that is in a powder form or that can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry, and contains asbestos.
Licensed Asbestos Assessor	A person who holds an asbestos assessor license
Licensed Asbestos Removalist	A person conducting a business or undertaking who is licensed under the WHS Regulation to carry out Class A or Class B asbestos removal work.
Membrane Filter Method	The membrane filter method described in the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission’s Guidance Note on the Membrane Filter Method for Estimating Airborne Asbestos Fibres, 2nd Edition [NOHSC: 3003 (2005)].
Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA)	The natural geological occurrence of asbestos minerals found in association with geological deposits including rock, sediment or soil.
Non-Friable Asbestos	Material containing asbestos that is not friable asbestos, including material containing asbestos fibres reinforced with a bonding compound.
Officer	An officer under the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (NSW) includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – an officer under section 9 of the <i>Corporations Act 2001</i> (Cth) – an officer of the Crown within the meaning of section 247 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (NSW), and – an officer of a public authority within the meaning of section 252 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (NSW). A partner in a partnership or an elected member of a local authority is not an officer while acting in that capacity.
Respirable Asbestos Fibre	An asbestos fibre that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is less than 3 micrometres (µm) wide – is more than 5 micrometres (µm) long, and – has a length to width ratio of more than 3:1.