

# FAQS

## ASBESTOS AUDITING AND LABELLING

### WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is a natural mineral that was used extensively in Australia up until the late 1980s in building and consumer products, until a national ban in 2003. Asbestos-containing materials are classified as either 'friable' (soft, crumbly) or 'bonded' (solid, rigid, non-friable). It can be found in:

- thermal insulation
- fibro cement sheeting
- vinyl floor coverings, adhesives and electrical switchboards
- roofs
- other building applications for houses, schools and other government and non-government buildings.

### WHY ARE ASBESTOS AUDITS AND LABELLING TAKING PLACE IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS?


The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 include specific duties relating to identifying asbestos in workplaces and indicating its location with clear signage. Once identified, asbestos containing material must be labelled and recorded in a school's asbestos register. The register must be updated after each quarterly visual inspection, and after building works are carried out.

Labels are placed at the entrances to buildings with identified asbestos-containing material and the front gate of the school, reminding people to contact reception before undertaking any building works. These warning labels help schools manage potential risks and ensure they are compliant with the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety framework.

### HOW IS ASBESTOS MANAGED IN VICTORIA'S GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS?

To ensure all Victorian schools are safe, asbestos management in schools is governed by a strict set of legislative and compliance requirements in accordance with Victoria's Occupational Health and Safety framework. Under these requirements, school principals are provided with a Schools Asbestos Management Plan and are accountable for the safe management of asbestos in their school.

The Asbestos Management Plan provides operational procedures and guidelines, as well as clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities in managing asbestos-containing materials and any incidents that may arise.



The treatment of asbestos-containing materials is based on its risk rating. This relates to the risk of fibres being released from the materials – any A1 or A2 rated material (high-risk asbestos) is immediately scheduled for removal when it is identified.

### HOW ELSE ARE SCHOOLS SUPPORTED?

The Victorian School Building Authority provides comprehensive training to school staff including principals and asbestos coordinators. Schools can also call a 24-hour asbestos help desk to register an asbestos incident, obtain advice and get further information.

### WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION REGARDING ASBESTOS?

You can find more information on asbestos on the following websites:

[www.asbestos.vic.gov.au](http://www.asbestos.vic.gov.au)

[www.worksafe.gov.vic.au](http://www.worksafe.gov.vic.au)

[www.epa.vic.gov.au](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au)

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/>