



ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT AND REMOVAL POLICY

August 2017

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- To ensure Victorian government schools appropriately manage asbestos containing materials (**ACM**) by: appointing a workplace asbestos coordinator (**Coordinator**), completing a School Asbestos Management Plan and Asbestos Register, adhere to the Fill on School Sites policy, and follow the protocols for works occurring onsite.
- To outline the Victorian School Building Authority's (**VSBA**) program for the scheduled removal of asbestos in schools (**Victorian School Asbestos Removal Program**).

This policy aligns with the following school asset lifecycle stage



RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007](#)

POLICY STATEMENT

For schools

Principals are responsible for ensuring that their schools are a safe workplace and, therefore, are their school's appointed workplace manager. On this basis, a Principal is ultimately responsible for the correct management of any ACM on school sites.

Audit Report and Asbestos Register

The VSBA conducts visual audits of all Victorian government school sites to identify ACM, the results of which can be found in each school's "Division 5 Audit Report" (**Audit Report**).

Based on the information in the Audit Report, schools are required to prepare an asbestos register that outlines all ACM on site (**Asbestos Register**). The register is to be updated following all subsequent Audit Reports and removal works.

Schools must make available to employees, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors a hard copy of the current Audit Report and Asbestos Register. A copy of the Audit Report can be accessed from the School Facilities Profile website. The Asbestos Register template can be located on the

Department's [OHS asbestos management site](#).

Appointment of Coordinator

If the Audit Report identifies a school as having ACM on site, the school must appoint a Coordinator to assume responsibility for the safe management of ACM on their school site. This includes:

- being the main contact point for all asbestos-related matters;
- managing ACM on site in accordance with policy and the School Asbestos Management Plan;
- organising quarterly visual inspections to assess the condition of ACM on site;
- the updating the Asbestos Register to accurately reflect the presence and state of ACM on site; and
- following up actions identified as a result of each inspection.

The Principal may assume the role of the Coordinator, or may delegate the responsibility to an authorised person.

School Asbestos Management Plan

All schools that are identified in the Audit Report as having ACM on site must have in place an [School Asbestos Management Plan](#), which outlines the school's



responsibilities in relation to ACM management and the required OHS processes and procedures to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Victorian School Asbestos Removal Program

Under the Victorian School Asbestos Removal Program, all medium-risk material (rated A3) is scheduled for removal over the next three years.

This will be carried out through two streams of work:

- Planned removal and reinstatement of A3 ACM; and
- Demolition of 100 targeted buildings in poor condition with high amounts of A3 ACM and replacement with modular facilities.

ACM Removal via VSBA Works

The approach to ACM removal depends on the type of works scheduled for that particular school site:

- *Capital works projects* – All ACM is removed from the construction zone;
- *Planned maintenance/Statewide Programs projects* – incidental asbestos is removed from the construction zone; or

During school-led works, the VSBA can provide procedural advice on asbestos removal and management.

Unscheduled and urgent removal

Unscheduled ACM removal or makesafe works are prioritised when disturbed or damaged asbestos is identified.

In the event that this occurs, the Coordinator must immediately follow the process in the incident response section of the School Asbestos Management Plan to ensure the immediate safety of the school site, and where relevant, the correct asbestos removal procedures.

Area of exclusion

Asbestos removal work is to be undertaken outside normal school hours, when students and employees including aftercare and local community groups are not present. Principals are responsible for ensuring that access to the relevant area during ACM removal works is restricted in order to limit any health and safety risks. In accordance with guidance from WorkSafe, this is a 15 metre exclusion zone for friable material. All

users of the space must be advised ahead of works.

For the VSBA

Various divisions within the VSBA and the Department of Education and Training have the responsibility to ensure that all schools are safe. They include:

- Department's People Division; and
- Regional Services Group (including regional staff).

The VSBA also engages program management, contractors and consultants to advise and provide services, including asbestos removalists and occupational hygienists.

Together, these parties work together to implement and manage the operation of the Asbestos Management Program, including:

- risk management of existing asbestos in schools and conducting removal works;
- provision of technical advice to schools and the VSBA;
- advising regional offices of relevant VSBA infrastructure services;
- provision of face-to-face training sessions for schools (i.e. Bricks and Mortar Asset Management training program);
- supporting schools in communicating with parents and the community;
- coordinating communication activities between schools, applicable divisions of the VSBA, and relevant stakeholders as required.

RATIONALE

The VSBA has in place the Asbestos Management Program to ensure Victorian government schools are safe for all students and staff, in accordance with the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) framework (refer to *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*).

The Victorian Government has committed to making all government schools asbestos free by 2020. The VSBA is systematically removing all ACM identified in the statewide audit, prioritising the ACM with higher risk ratings.

All identified high-risk material (A1 and A2 rated ACM) has already been removed. The



VSBA is currently working on removing all asbestos that may pose a risk in the future, being A3 rated ACM.

The remaining asbestos in schools is safe to be managed in place and removed as part of future capital works.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Asbestos risk ratings

Asbestos is rated according to the risk of fibre release from the materials in which it is incorporated.

If asbestos is in good condition and left undisturbed, it is unlikely that asbestos fibres will be released into the air and the health risk is very low.

Labelling

All Victorian government school buildings containing asbestos are labelled.

Labelling helps schools and the VSBA to safely induct contractors on site, as well as manage potential risks and ensure that contractors comply with the Victorian OHS framework.

Individual school building asbestos labels can only be removed if the following process has occurred:

1. Works scheduled to occur on a building identified as having asbestos in the Audit Report.
2. Division 6 (intrusive) audit undertaken of entire building
3. All asbestos identified in Division 6 audit is removed from school building.
4. Clearance certificate issued by hygienist for building.
5. Occupational Hygienist reviews the documentation (clearance certificates, Audit Report and report from the Division 6 audit) for the building to confirm that all identified asbestos has been removed.
6. School Asbestos Register updated.

The main label at reception should not be removed at any time, so long as the school is required to have an School Asbestos Management Plan in place.

Asbestos contaminated soil

The safety of our staff and students is of paramount importance. The VSBA Asbestos in Soils policy is designed to ensure the safety of school communities. Refer to the [Asbestos in Soils policy](#) for more information.

Due to the health and safety risks associated with contaminated fill, school councils are not authorised to enter into agreements to accept fill on school sites. Refer to the [Fill on school sites policy](#) for further information.

Roles and responsibilities

People Division

- Provision of proactive and accessible systems for the on-going management of asbestos-containing materials in schools.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
A1-A2	Damaged or exposed asbestos, e.g. gaskets, switchboard backings. Scheduled for complete removal when identified.
A3	Predominantly found in building eaves and sheeting in classroom walls, programmed for removal as part of the Victorian Schools Asbestos Removal Program.
A4	Often in areas with limited access (e.g. in roof, under buildings, behind walls), should be programmed for removal during maintenance or refurbishment works.
A5	Predominantly found in adhesive mastic, should be managed and reinspected periodically.

- Monitor the systems to assess how effectively they are operating in schools through an OHS audit program.
- Identify opportunities for system improvement through data analysis.
- Provision of an OHS Advisory Service to support schools in implementing asbestos management systems.
- Provision of an OHS Asbestos eLearning module.

Regional Services Group – regional staff



- Provide advice to schools on how to access appropriate infrastructure services at the point of need.
- Assist with the management and identification of issues associated with external service providers as required.

Contractors

- Report to the Administration Office upon arrival to the site.
- Be inducted prior to commencing works.
- Provision of a Safe Work Method Statement.
- Provision Asbestos Removal Control Plan.
- Report any asbestos-related issues or incidents to the Workplace Asbestos Coordinator.
- Ensure that any inquiries or concerns expressed by parents, students or other members of the school community are referred to the Workplace Asbestos

Coordinator who will report any issues to the Workplace Manager.

- Comply with all policies, procedures and instructions in the School Asbestos Management Plan.

Construction project managers / consultants

- Manage works schedule to ensure asbestos removal in accordance with the relevant policy.

Occupational hygienist

- Verify that there is no visible asbestos residue remaining within the work area following construction works.
- Undertake air-monitoring during and after asbestos removal works.
- Provision of air-monitoring results to Workplace Manager and/or Asbestos Coordinator.
- Provision of Clearance Certificate indicating that asbestos fibres in the area are below the limit of detection.