WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-AUF-TPL · Unexpected Find of Asbestos Procedure

Product Overview

For: Australian businesses with older buildings, plant or sites, and the trades and contractors who work in them: managers, supervisors and WHS advisers

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

What everyone does when suspected asbestos turns up, or known asbestos is damaged: stop, isolate, prevent spread and notify, then a competent person's assessment, licensed clean-up where needed, clearance, an exposure record and updates to the register and plan.

The procedure (Word and PDF) covers when it applies, the four steps straight away (stop, isolate, prevent spread, notify), assessment by a competent person with sampling where needed, who cleans up what (friable asbestos only a Class A licensed removalist; non-friable over 10 square metres a Class A or B licensed removalist), clearance before the area is used again, the people who may have been exposed, and updating the asbestos register and management plan.

The Asbestos Incident and Exposure Record (Word and PDF) records what was found, the immediate steps with times, the assessment, the clean-up, clearance and waste disposal, everyone who may have been exposed, and the follow-up actions.

Written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws, in plain terms that also work in Victoria. The guide's state and territory notes show where the law differs, including the regulator to contact. Made by Orana Skills Centre.

What is included

Item	File
Unexpected find of asbestos procedure: when it applies, stop, isolate, prevent spread, notify, assessment, clean-up and clearance, exposure, register and plan updates	02_TEMPLATE/Unexpected Find of Asbestos Procedure.docx and .pdf
Asbestos incident and exposure record: what was found, immediate steps, assessment, clean-up and clearance, people who may have been exposed, follow-up	02_TEMPLATE/Asbestos Incident and Exposure Record.docx and .pdf
How to Use This Template: how to complete and adapt it, the law in brief, state and territory notes, records and every placeholder	01_START_HERE/How to Use This Template.pdf
Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Who it is for

- Facilities and site managers who need a clear response when asbestos turns up
- Maintenance crews and contractors working in older buildings

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training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/unexpected-find-of-asbestos-procedure

How to Use This Template

How to complete, adapt and keep the unexpected find of asbestos procedure

1 What this template is for

Most asbestos exposures at work happen to people who did not know it was there: a tradesperson drilling an old wall, a crew lifting a floor. What happens in the first minutes after a find decides whether anyone else is exposed and whether fibres spread through the building.

This procedure gives everyone the same simple response (stop, isolate, prevent spread, notify), then the steps for the business: a competent person's assessment, a safe clean-up by the right person, clearance, the record of who may have been exposed, and fixing the cause.

2 How to use it

Step	What to do
1	Fill in the placeholders: the asbestos contact, the competent person you will call, your support service and the regulator for your jurisdiction.
2	Arrange in advance who you will call: a competent person to assess, and a licensed removalist for friable asbestos or larger amounts.
3	Keep an asbestos kit where it can be reached quickly: barrier tape, 'Asbestos: do not enter' signs and copies of the record form.
4	Train workers, supervisors and contractors in section 3, and put the four steps where people working in older buildings will see them.
5	When a find happens, follow the procedure and complete the Asbestos Incident and Exposure Record as you go.
6	Afterwards, update the asbestos register and management plan, find and fix the cause, and tell the workers what changed.
7	Review the procedure with the asbestos management plan, and after every unexpected find.

Make it work, not just exist

- Make stopping easy. If people fear the cost or the blame of stopping a job, they will finish it first.
- Know your numbers before you need them: the competent person and the licensed removalist, on the procedure, not in someone's phone.
- Look for the cause, not only the clean-up: an unexpected find usually means an area was not inspected or the register was not checked.

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YOUR LOGO
Right-click > Change Picture

[Company name]

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Unexpected Find of Asbestos Procedure

What to do when suspected asbestos is found, or known asbestos is damaged or disturbed

1 Purpose and scope

This procedure tells everyone at **[Company name]** what to do when material that might be asbestos is found and is not on the asbestos register, or when asbestos on the register is damaged or disturbed. It keeps people from being exposed, stops fibres spreading, and makes sure the material is assessed, cleaned up safely and recorded. It applies to workers, contractors and visitors at all our workplaces.

2 When to use it

- Material that might contain asbestos is uncovered during work: behind a wall or under a floor, in a ceiling space, around pipes or plant
- An asbestos item on the register is drilled, cut, broken, cracked or otherwise damaged
- Asbestos may have been disturbed by a storm, fire, flood, vehicle impact or vandalism
- Dust or debris that might contain asbestos is found, or an area marked 'not inspected' is opened up
- Someone reports that work was done on suspect material without a check

You do not have to be sure it is asbestos. Suspecting it is enough. You cannot tell asbestos by looking: treat it as asbestos until a competent person says otherwise.

3 Straight away: stop, isolate, prevent spread, notify

Step	What to do
Stop	Stop work straight away. Do not keep going to finish the job. Switch off tools and plant that could spread dust, if that is safe.
Isolate	Get everyone out of the area who does not need to be there. Close it off with barriers or tape and a sign: 'Asbestos: do not enter'. Shut doors and windows, and turn off air conditioning or ventilation that serves the area.
Prevent spread	Do not sweep, vacuum with an ordinary vacuum, hose, blow or move the material. Do not walk dust out of the area. Anyone who may have dust on them stays near the area until told how to clean up; contaminated clothing is not taken home.
Notify	Tell your supervisor and **[Asbestos contact]** straight away. They tell the person with management or control of the workplace, any principal contractor, and the workers and contractors nearby.

Stop

If you suspect asbestos: stop, keep away, report, and wait. Stopping for suspected asbestos is never the wrong call, and nobody is in trouble for it.

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Unexpected Find of Asbestos Procedure

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. What everyone does when suspected asbestos turns up, or known asbestos is damaged: stop, isolate, prevent spread and notify, then a competent person's assessment, licensed clean-up where needed, clearance, an exposure record and updates to the register and plan.

What the full product contains

- **Unexpected find of asbestos procedure: when it applies, stop, isolate, prevent spread, notify, assessment, clean-up and clearance, exposure, register and plan updates**
  02_TEMPLATE/Unexpected Find of Asbestos Procedure.docx and .pdf
- **Asbestos incident and exposure record: what was found, immediate steps, assessment, clean-up and clearance, people who may have been exposed, follow-up**
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  01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header
- PDF copies of the Word documents, for printing blank
- Delivered as a single ZIP download

Get the full editable documents

https://training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/unexpected-find-of-asbestos-procedure

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