

16 November 2020

National Asbestos Awareness Week 23 – 29 November 2020

It is easy to forget that asbestos is still present in millions of Australian homes, but it is a fact that if a house was built or renovated before 1990, there is a good chance it has some asbestos.

Asbestos can be easily disturbed when doing renovations, home improvements and maintenance.

National Asbestos Awareness Week 2020 reminds Australians to be asbestos aware before they start any work around the home. Asbestos lurks in more places than you'd think.

Asbestos is a known carcinogen and inhaling asbestos fibres can cause a number of life-threatening diseases including pleural disease, asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer.

Asbestos-related diseases cause approximately 4,000 deaths a year.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Australian have increased their love of DIY and are using the extra time at home to do some home improvements and maintenance.

But what they might not know is that this work could be putting their health or someone else's health at risk. Asbestos materials are still commonly found in bathrooms, laundries and kitchens as well as behind tiles and under flooring.

"We are encouraging our community members to make sure an asbestos check forms part of their DIY checklist before starting any home improvements" said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Ambrose Doolan. "Research shows that 1 in 5 DIYers have encountered asbestos, but only half sought any kind of professional help to deal with it."

"Additionally, a third admitted to disposing of the asbestos improperly – including in their own household bin or a neighbour's bin," said Cr Doolan.

"Just like plumbing and electrical work, asbestos removal – or jobs around the home that might uncover asbestos – are jobs best left to the experts," Cr Doolan explained.

"This Asbestos Awareness Week we are calling on all Australians to know the health risk, be aware of where asbestos might be found before starting work and call a profession for help," Cr Doolan concluded.

Media: Leanne Ryan | (02) 6849 2000