

KEEPING SAFE

# Asbestos



## How to keep safe

**We are here to help.**

Your health, safety and wellbeing are very important to us.

**If you are concerned about asbestos, please call us any time on**

**0800 801 601**

Calls to this number are free, including from a mobile phone.

## Tips to help keep safe:



Don't try to fix or clean up asbestos yourself.



Take shoes off before coming inside or use a door mat to clean shoes.



Please keep pets, such as a dog, secured and away from any area where contractors are working.



Change your clothes and wash your hands before coming home if your work involves asbestos.



Do not enter an asbestos removal area and please closely supervise children while work is in progress.



Place food gardens away from house walls and the road, especially if the property is older.



If your house is damaged please let us know straight away so it can be repaired quickly.



**You can phone Healthline any time on 0800 611 116, to talk to a nurse. Calls to this number are free, including from a mobile phone.**

# Asbestos

## Always call us if you need any maintenance or repairs

As a general rule, please avoid doing repairs or maintenance yourself, as it may disturb hazards such as asbestos. Especially avoid doing any work that involves cutting, sanding, water-blasting or removing building materials.

Housing New Zealand will use specialist contractors who will carry out any repairs in a way that prevents asbestos fibres being released.

Contact Housing New Zealand straight away if there is damage to any surface you think could contain asbestos. Fixing these surfaces if asbestos is present will be undertaken by specialist contractors, as an urgent job.

## What will happen if asbestos removal or repairs are required?

- If major asbestos removal work needs to be done, we will always let you know. The contractor will explain the work they will be doing and any hazards to be aware of, give you a timeframe and answer any questions you may have.
- Please do not enter the asbestos removal area while work is being undertaken. This area will be clearly identified by the contractor before work starts. This safety requirement applies to anyone either living in or visiting the property, at any time while work is in progress.
- Please keep pets, such as a dog, secured and away from any areas where contractors are working.
- Never go back into these areas until the contractor says it is safe to do so.
- In some cases, for safety reasons, temporary accommodation may be required. Your Tenancy Manager will work with you to organise this.
- Remember we are here to help, so please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

## More information - asbestos

### What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a natural material made up of tiny fibres.

Asbestos was used in a range of building products including cement roofing, wall cladding, soffits, fencing, garage/shed cladding, some textured ceiling finishes and as backing on older vinyl floor coverings.

It could be present in houses built before 2000.

### What are the risks?

There is only a health risk when asbestos fibres become airborne and are inhaled.

This can happen when materials containing asbestos are sanded, cut, water-blasted, drilled or broken. This can occur due to accidental damage (eg during a storm or fire) or during maintenance or removal work. This is why we only use specialist contractors, who carry out maintenance and repairs safely.

### What if asbestos is in my house?

You will remain safe provided surfaces are not disturbed or damaged and remain sealed (eg with a coat of paint).

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