

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM



Date: 31st May 2017

Asbestos - Exposure and safe working requirements

Unfortunately, two NZRB employees were potentially exposed to asbestos recently when assisting with the removal of cables from a Race Club building that was scheduled for demolition. While proper testing had been undertaken by the Demolition Contractor this had not been communicated to the NZRB employees prior to the staff undertaking work. In light of this, we would like to remind you about safe working requirements around asbestos both in standard BAU work and assisting with equipment removal for buildings scheduled for demolition.

Where demolition is planned, conducting of asbestos tests is required under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and Asbestos Regulations 2016 and must be performed by an approved asbestos testing company prior to any disturbance or work being undertaken. The information contained in these reports must be communicated to all workers involved prior to demolition. This is to ensure that work done does not accidentally disturb any identified asbestos through breaking, or drilling, and that safe removal occurs. Where you are undertaking work that affects surfaces or materials that may potentially have or are confirmed to have asbestos these locations should be held in a central register by the property owner and appropriate equipment and practice sbe in place to prevent exposure.

Asbestos has a known risk of causing harm to persons with no identified maximum permissible threshold of exposure. Accordingly, we ask that all NZRB staff or contractors request an Asbestos Assessment Report from the property owner before undertaking work in preparation for demolition program. If this has not been provided, work should not commence until this assessment has been performed and results communicated.

As a general rule: The older a building or structure, the more likely asbestos may be identified. Specifically, there is a higher risk of asbestos in the following locations of a structure;

- Ceiling tiles manufactured and installed up to the early 1980's
- Ceiling insulation up to the mid 1970's
- Solid fire stop doors may contain asbestos in the interior lining
- Exterior wire conduit installed up to the mid 1970's
- Underground ACM ducting installed up to the mid 1980's
- Exterior wall and roof cladding - often described as compressed fibre cement.

Further information can be obtained from the following;

- Asbestos regulations 2016 - [Legislation.govt.nz](http://legislation.govt.nz)
- WorkSafe Demolition and Refurbishment - worksafenz.govt.nz
- Roles and responsibilities for workers and PCBU's - worksafenz.govt.nz

If you have any questions regarding this, please contact healthandsafety@nzrb.co.nz.