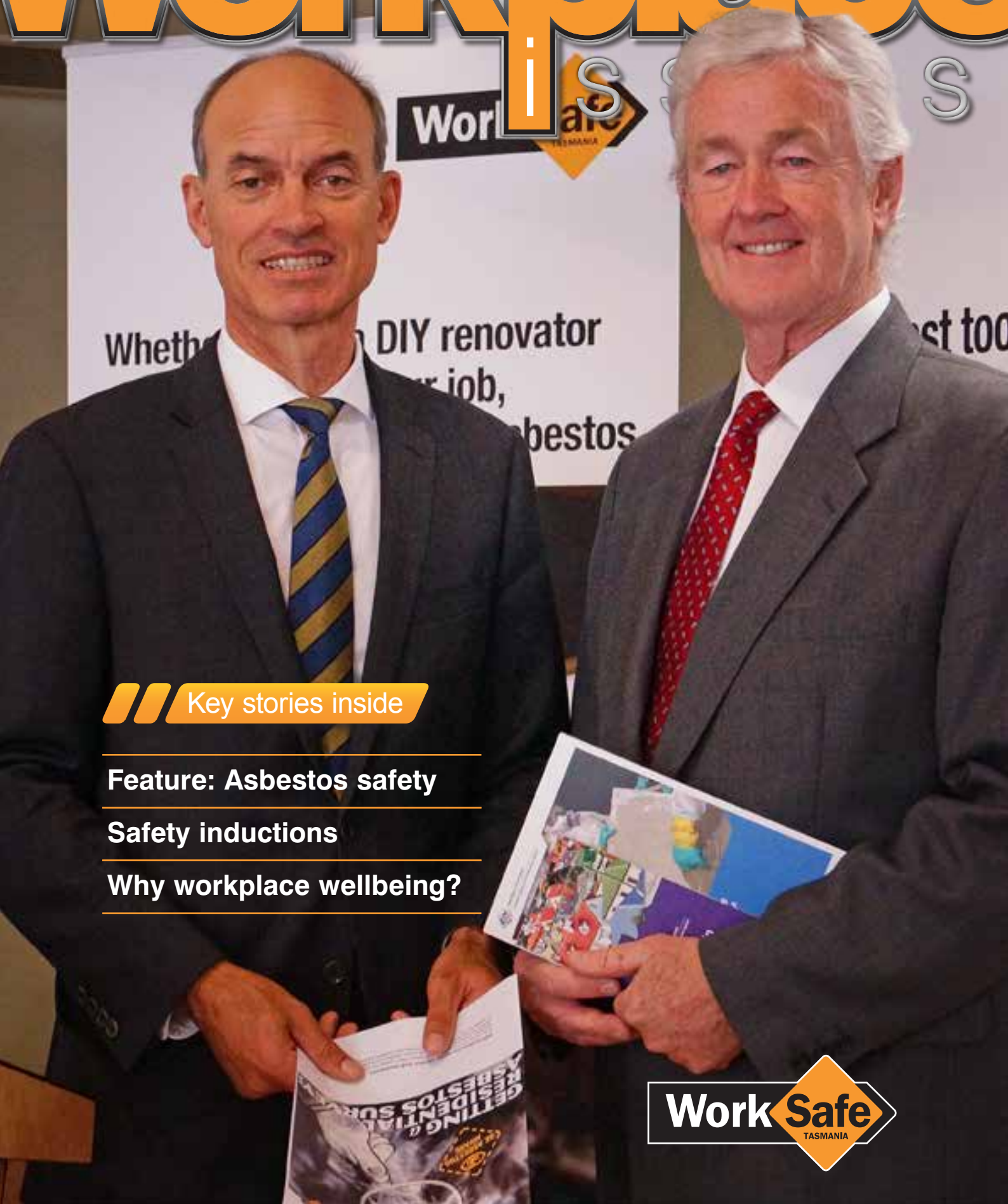


June 2017

# Workplace



**Key stories inside**

**Feature: Asbestos safety**

**Safety inductions**

**Why workplace wellbeing?**

**WorkSafe**  
TASMANIA

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Throughout, the acronyms 'WHS' stands for work health and safety and 'PCBU' stands for person conducting a business or undertaking.

## Be asbestos aware



By now, you will have seen WorkSafe's ads in the newspapers, on the television and over the radio — and on the highly visible billboards around the State — promoting asbestos awareness and safety.

Many people are unaware of where asbestos can be found in and around their homes: in flooring and wall sheeting, in gutters and roofing, in fencing; in kitchens, bathrooms, garages and sheds.

With research showing us that the next wave of asbestos-related disease will be amongst DIY home renovators, it's important to understand where asbestos is around your home, and the dangers of disturbing or removing it.

The information at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety) encourages people to engage a licensed asbestos assessor to undertake an asbestos survey to know exactly where asbestos is in their homes before they start any renovation work. Using a licenced asbestos removalist for removal work is also encouraged. In some cases, DIY is not always the best option.

While the media promotion is now complete, you'll still find that important information on WorkSafe's website and in the special feature in this edition of *Workplace Issues*.

So if you're thinking about renovating your home, or you're a tradesperson who does repair, renovation and building work in homes, I encourage

you to check out this accurate and practical advice before you pick up your tools. It could save your life.

Tasmania is currently experiencing some very poor health outcomes.

To address this, the Hodgman Liberal Government is investing over \$6.4 million over the next four years through its 'Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan'.

This Plan includes workplaces turning their good intentions into sustainable healthy habits, through the Tasmania Healthy and Safe Workplace Initiative.

Workplace wellbeing programs can make a positive contribution to improving people's health. With Australians spending about one third of their lives at work, it makes good sense to consider the workplace as an important setting to improve health and wellbeing. This in turn can also have a positive impact on business performance, improving safety and efficiency.

Over the coming months, WorkSafe Tasmania and the WorkCover Tasmania Board are reinvigorating their wellbeing services, to educate and enable business to embrace these kinds of workplace programs that improve health, safety and wellbeing. I look forward to working with others to progress.

As always, keep healthy and safe, and enjoy this quarter's edition of *Workplace Issues*.





## Asbestos awareness campaign + resources

One of the four billboards around the state promoting the asbestos awareness message

**In May, WorkSafe launched a new media campaign focussing on asbestos safety, targeting DIY home renovators and tradespeople building or working in residential homes.**

The aim was to alert these audiences to 'be asbestos aware' and before they picked up any tool, to check out the information on our website and get armed with the facts about asbestos.

The campaign rolled out print, radio, billboard and TV ads (see one of them on our back cover) and informative posts on our Facebook page.

This media activity directed audiences towards expanded information on our website. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety) to find this plus info

sheets and ads from the campaign.

The campaign was conducted in partnership with the federal Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency ([www.asbestossafety.gov.au](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au)) and supported by the WorkCover Tasmania Board.

In this edition of Workplace Issues, we've reproduced some of the website's information so you can discuss it in your workplace — or take it home to consider when you're planning your next home reno project.

# Asbestos facts

## Manufacturing and using asbestos is banned in Australia

All types of asbestos were prohibited in Australian workplaces from 31 December 2003. This ban is reflected in WHS laws in all states.

The ban on using asbestos in Australia is supplemented by the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956. These ban the importing of all types of asbestos and products containing asbestos, except under limited circumstances.

Asbestos is still widely used in some countries. Despite being a prohibited import in Australia, goods containing asbestos are still being located at the border. Certification provided to importers from overseas manufacturers that goods are asbestos-free has sometimes been proven incorrect or unreliable.

Local standards in some countries may classify goods 'asbestos free' if they

meet a certain *low* level of asbestos content. In Australia, a product found with *any* level of asbestos is prohibited. Importers should be aware of the varying definitions and standards applied in the country of origin and/or supply. The Australian Regulations will apply at the border.

## Inhaling asbestos fibres can be associated with diseases including asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma

Disturbing any amount of asbestos can release fibres into the air. These could be inhaled or swallowed, which may lead to diseases such as asbestosis or mesothelioma in later years.

Even limited or short-term exposure to asbestos fibres can be dangerous, but exposure does not make developing an asbestos-related disease inevitable. There is still much that is unknown about why some people are susceptible to asbestos-related diseases, while

others who have been regularly exposed to asbestos may avoid them.

## Asbestos in good condition presents a very low risk to someone's health

Scientific and medical evidence suggests that living in a building that contains asbestos is not dangerous, as long as the asbestos product is in good condition: that is, undamaged and undisturbed.

For example, asbestos cement sheeting does not pose an increased health risk as long as it is in good condition, well maintained and is not disturbed or damaged.

However, if the asbestos products become damaged or they start to deteriorate, this increases the likelihood that asbestos fibres may become airborne. It's advisable to have them stabilised and removed.

Visually inspect the materials from time to time for deterioration and damage.

# Asbestos myths

## My building inspection report would have told me if there was asbestos present

It's not mandatory for building inspection reports to identify asbestos in homes. The seller is not obliged to tell you if the house contains asbestos, either.

Therefore, it's possible that asbestos may be present in your home. As a general guide, if your house was built:

- before the mid-1980s: it's highly likely it contains some asbestos products
- between the mid-1980s and 1990: it's likely it would contain asbestos

- after 1990: it's unlikely it would contain asbestos.

It's important to know where asbestos is in your home. It's recommended that you get a licenced asbestos assessor to inspect the property before any renovations take place. To find one, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'asbestos assessor search'.

## Only people who worked heavily with asbestos will get an asbestos disease

While exposure doesn't make developing an asbestos-related disease inevitable, even limited or short-term exposure to asbestos fibres can be

dangerous. There is no identified safe level of exposure to asbestos.

In the past, many victims of asbestos-related disease were the children and wives of workers who brought asbestos home on their clothes.

We're now seeing people who have never worked with asbestos — but were exposed to it through activities such as home renovations — suffer from these diseases.

## Getting an asbestos survey

Whether you're a workplace/ tradesperson or a DIY renovator, if the house you're working on was built or renovated before the 1990s, it probably contains some form of asbestos.

If you're unsure whether your home contains asbestos, an asbestos survey will help you learn its location and condition, and give guidance on how to manage the risk.

### What is an asbestos survey?

A licensed asbestos contractor conducts an audit of your property to identify asbestos containing material; then provides you with a report making recommendations on removal or management strategies.

### When should I get an asbestos survey done?

It's important that a survey be conducted **before** you start work to avoid disturbing any asbestos containing material.

You may also consider getting an asbestos survey done before you purchase a property (it's not mandatory for building inspection reports to identify asbestos, nor for a seller to tell you if the house contains asbestos).

Asbestos in poor condition will need to be removed or managed, and the cost of this might be something you need to consider.

### Where do I find someone to carry out the survey?

To find a licensed asbestos assessor in Tasmania, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'asbestos assessor search'.

### What should the report I receive include?

The asbestos assessor should provide you with a report that includes:

- details of the person conducting the survey

- the location and a description of materials that contain/are suspected to contain asbestos, including photos
- laboratory testing results, if sampling is done
- recommended action items (management strategies or removal).

Carefully read the report and any recommendations made by the asbestos assessor. If you're unsure about any aspects of the report, ask them for further advice or explanation.

If you're the homeowner, you should also provide a copy of the report to any tradesperson who intends to carry out work on your home, so they're aware of the presence of asbestos in your property.

*This information is an extract from our information sheet 'Getting an asbestos survey'. To see the full guidance, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety)*

## Must I have samples tested for asbestos by a special laboratory?

Yes — since 1 January 2017, the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 state you must use a laboratory accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA; [www.nata.com.au](http://www.nata.com.au)) to test samples of asbestos or asbestos containing materials (ACM).

Be aware of the requirements to identify asbestos or ACM in your workplace:

- Regulation 422: requires that a person with management or control of a workplace, must ensure that all asbestos or ACM is identified by a competent person (a licensed

asbestos assessor is deemed a competent person for the purpose of the regulations). If asbestos or ACM cannot be identified but a competent person believes that asbestos or ACM may be present, it must be assumed that asbestos is present

- Regulation 423(1): allows for a person with management or control of a workplace to identify asbestos or ACM by having a sample tested for it. The person must ensure the sample is analysed by a NATA-accredited laboratory accredited for the relevant test method

- Regulation 479(1): applies if there is uncertainty or reasonable grounds as to whether or not work to be undertaken is asbestos-related work. This regulation requires the PCBU to ensure that a sample is taken from the workplace and is analysed to determine if asbestos or ACM is present.

To find an experienced asbestos assessor in Tasmania who can help you identify asbestos and safely take samples for you, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'asbestos assessor'.



# Asbestos safety for tradies

If you're doing renovations, repairs or building work, it's important to first know whether asbestos may be present and how to deal with it safely.

If a house was built or renovated before the 1990s, it probably contains some form of asbestos.

## Where it's found

Asbestos was added to over 3,000 products, including (but not limited to) those used in home areas commonly renovated or repaired:

- bathrooms
- kitchens
- under vinyl floors, behind tiles and in carpet underlay
- carports, sheds and outbuildings

- guttering, downpipes and roof sheeting.

See a fuller list in the 'Where you'll find it' article in this edition.

## What you should do

For **houses**: you should make sure any asbestos is identified and if possible, have it removed by a licensed asbestos removalist.

For a **non-residential building**: ask the person with management or control for a copy of the asbestos register before you start work. If there's no register, make sure the building is inspected to determine if any asbestos is present — or simply assume it is present.

To find a licensed assessor and/or removalist, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'asbestos search'.

## Find it in the codes of practice

For full guidance, see the How to Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace code and How to Safely Remove Asbestos in the Workplace code.

These codes have easy to understand, practical guidance (including samples and templates) for managing the risks associated with asbestos in a workplace, and therefore reduce the incidence of asbestos-related diseases such as mesothelioma, asbestosis and lung cancer.

Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'codes 2016'.



*If I'm exposed to asbestos because of an incident at work, is there somewhere I can have this recorded in case of future complications?*

Yes. The Australian Government has created the National Asbestos Exposure Register to record the details of people who think they may have been exposed to asbestos. You can submit your details to this register by going to [www.asbestossafety.gov.au](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au) and choosing the 'exposure register' link.

Your PCBU:

- should have procedures in place for reporting and recording any workplace incident
- must notify WorkSafe of any uncontrolled exposure to a

substance such as asbestos. They can do this by calling 1300 366 322.

You should also keep your own records, including:

- employment information
- when, where and how the exposure occurred
- what work was being done at the time
- what product was involved (if known)
- details of witnesses if possible
- whether diagnosed with an asbestos related disease (if yes, keep medical records).

## Asbestos registers: what you need to

### Who needs a register?

You must create and maintain an up-to-date asbestos register for any of your workplaces that were constructed before 31 December 2003.

### Who doesn't need a register?

You don't need an asbestos register if:

- your workplace was constructed after 31 December 2003 and
- no asbestos has been identified at your workplace and
- no asbestos is likely to be present at your workplace.

This requirement is also not applicable to domestic premises or naturally occurring asbestos.

### What does the register list?

Your asbestos register must list all identified (or assumed) asbestos in your workplace. Specifically, it must:

- record any asbestos or asbestos containing material (ACM) that has been identified or is likely to be present at your workplace from time to time
- the date the asbestos or ACM was identified
- the location, type and condition of the asbestos.

A comprehensive register may also include:

- details of any asbestos assumed to be in your workplace
- results of any analysis that confirms a material at your workplace is or is not asbestos

- dates when the identification was carried out

- details of inaccessible areas.

You might also attach photographs or drawings to show the location of the asbestos or ACM in your workplace.

### What if you already have a register?

If your workplace already has an asbestos register, there's no need to create another one — simply review and revise it to ensure it has the necessary detail outlined above.

### Who should have access to the register?

You must ensure that the asbestos register is readily accessible to:

- any worker who has carried out, carries out or intends to carry out work at the workplace, where that work involves a risk of exposure to airborne asbestos
- health and safety representatives who represent these workers
- a PCBU that has carried out, carries out or intends to carry out work at the workplace, where that work involves a risk of exposure to airborne asbestos
- a PCBU that has required, requires or intends to require work to be carried out at the workplace, where that work involves a risk of exposure to airborne asbestos.

If workers consider the work they're about to do will disturb asbestos, they should talk to the person with management and control of the workplace or their health and safety representative.

If you're the person with management or control of the workplace, you should be advised if any asbestos or ACM is identified and **not** included in the asbestos register for the workplace.

### When would asbestos **not** be recorded in the register?

In some cases it may not be necessary to include asbestos or ACM that is only temporarily present in the workplace. For example, if plant that contains asbestos is being repaired at your workplace but will only be there for a short period while being repaired, you don't need to record it in your register.

In instances like this, the person with management or control of the workplace should be advised that asbestos or ACM has been identified, but not included in the asbestos register for the workplace.

However, if the plant is often at the workplace (for example, if you specialise in repairing plant that typically contains asbestos), it's important to include this in your register.

**Note:** Where work involving asbestos is carried out, you must ensure the safety of your workers.

### What if you identify previously unknown asbestos?

If asbestos or ACM that you didn't previously know about is discovered, then you must advise the person with management or control of your workplace. They must have it identified by a competent person and added it to your workplace's register.





# Asbestos: Where you'll find it

know

If you didn't have a register before (that is, this is the first asbestos you've identified at your workplace), then you must create one, as outlined above.

## What if you're doing work at a domestic premise?

Domestic premises aren't required to have registers, so if you find asbestos or ACM while doing any work at one, you must advise the homeowner or landlord that you've identified asbestos and taken appropriate action.

## Do you need to review the register?

Yes — at least every five years to make sure it's kept up-to-date. But you should also review it if you:

- review your asbestos management plan
- identify further asbestos in your workplace
- remove, disturb, seal or enclose any asbestos in your workplace.

## How should you review it?

It might be appropriate to have a competent person review your register. Whoever conducts the review, they should visually inspect the asbestos to determine its condition, and revise your register as appropriate.

They might also use previous asbestos registers and records relating to asbestos removal jobs (such as clearance certificates) to help identify all asbestos and ACM in your workplace.

## What happens if you sell our premises?

If you plan to relinquish management or control of your workplace (for instance, selling the workplace or the business or undertaking), you must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that a copy of your asbestos register is given to the person who assumes management or control of the workplace.

## Where can you get a template?

You can find a template for an asbestos register in the code of practice *How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace*. Go to the WorkSafe website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'codes 2016'.

Many people are unaware of the full range of materials that contain asbestos that can be found in and around many Australian homes.

The versatility of asbestos made it attractive to many industries. It's thought to have more than 3,000 applications worldwide; and Australia was one of the highest users per capita in the world up until the mid-1980s.

## At a glance

The use of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in the home has been extensive. There are many areas where ACMs can be found, such as:

- carpet and tile underlays
- carports and sheds
- concrete formwork
- expansion joints
- fencing
- flexible building boards
- guttering
- imitation brick cladding
- packing under beams
- roof sheeting and capping
- telecommunications pits
- vinyl sheet flooring
- wall sheeting (flat or a weatherboard style)
- waterproof membrane.

Approximately one third of all homes built in Australia contain asbestos products.

The widespread use of asbestos has left a deadly legacy.

## What to do

It's important to know where asbestos is in your home. You should consider engaging an experienced asbestos assessor to identify any potential asbestos materials. To find one, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'asbestos assessor search'.



# ASBESTOS

## In Australia



Around **1/3** of all homes built between 1945 and the late 1980s may contain asbestos-containing materials\*

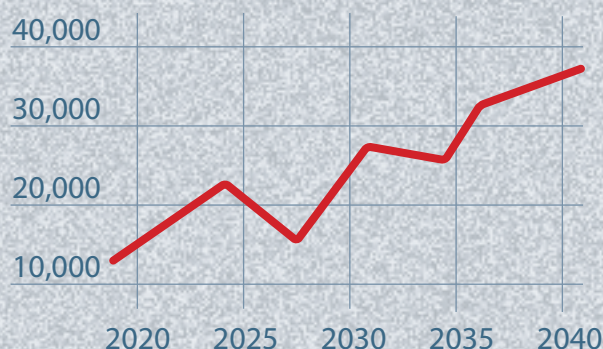


**Australia** was one of the highest per capita users of asbestos before it was banned \*

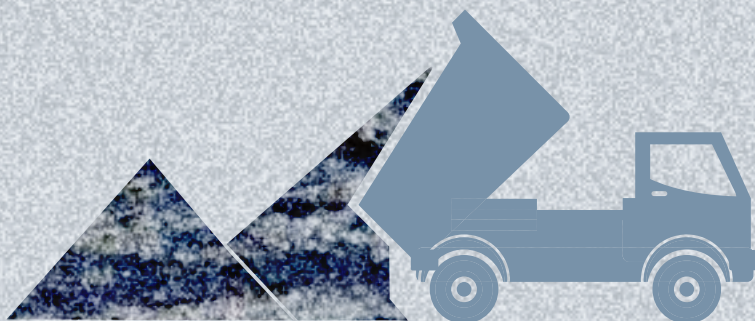


In 2015, there were 650 new cases of the disease mesothelioma reported to the Australian Mesothelioma Registry (AMR)\*\*:

**505 males | 145 females**



In the next 20 years, it's estimated another **30-40,000** Australians will be diagnosed with an asbestos related disease\*



Currently, around **4,000-5,000** tons of asbestos-contaminated soil is disposed of each year in Tasmania.\*\*

From the AMR's survey of registrants diagnosed since 1 July 2010\*\*\*:

- 80% indicated possible or probable asbestos exposure in work settings
- 60% indicated possible or probable exposure in non-work settings

For more facts about asbestos, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety)

### Sources

\*Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency [www.asbestossafety.gov.au](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au)

\*\* WorkSafe's National Strategic Plan quarterly report

\*\*\* From the Fifth Annual Report of the Australian Mesothelioma Registry [www.mesothelioma-australia.com](http://www.mesothelioma-australia.com)





# Build a safety system: Inductions

In this series, we've helped you build an effective safety management system, specific to your workplace needs. You'll find previous articles in past editions (starting from the September 2015 edition) at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) under the resources tab. In this edition, we cover inductions.

## What are inductions?

When a new worker starts work, the usual protocol is to show them around and tell them what they need to know about working at your business and worksite, and introduce them to their supervisor and fellow workers. This process is called an induction, and it's an important training and safety tool.

You can explain how you manage safety, and your expectations and standards for safety. They're a way of demonstrating how you make safety a priority in your business. An induction sets the scene from day one!

During an induction, explain your:

- WHS policies and safe work procedures
- procedures for identifying hazards and managing risk; reporting hazards, incidents, near misses and injuries; and what to do in an emergency
- WHS representatives, committee, first aider and fire warden.

## Who should be inducted?

New workers, staff returning after a long absence, staff changing roles or worksites. Contractors, visitors and volunteers.

Regardless of their experience and responsibility, all your workers (even senior managers) need to understand your WHS policy and procedures, emergency and incident reporting procedures, and consultation systems.

If you've never done inductions before, it's worthwhile doing one with each of your existing workers (no matter how long they've been with you). You can't afford to assume that every worker is aware of what's required with health and safety.

And make sure you consider each individual's needs. Mature-aged workers, graduates, school leavers, apprentices will have different needs for induction. Their learning processes will also vary. Take into account different literacy levels, too: perhaps photos will be helpful for explaining safe work procedures or identifying first aiders and safety reps.

## Using induction tools

Use an induction checklist to make sure you cover all important information. To start you off, look at the free induction tools at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) (search for 'safety advisors' and follow the link to the 'sample forms, policies and registers'). There's an online tool at [www.betterwork.tas.gov.au](http://www.betterwork.tas.gov.au).

One size does not fit all: induction requirements depend on what happens at your workplace, what they are doing there, and the hazards and risk associated with that work.

A note about 'outsiders': an electrical contractor doing repair work on your factory floor would require a detailed site induction. A supplier meeting in your office may only require an information sheet covering essentials, such as what to do in an emergency (they probably don't need to know who your WHS reps are).

So adjust these tools to suit your specific needs.

## Timing and mentoring

It might not be practical to hit your worker with a full induction day!

Consider carrying out the induction over a week or two, with follow up discussions.

You might also want to buddy a new worker up with a more experienced worker, who can answer their questions and explain things again after the initial induction.

## Signing off

Most inductions require workers to sign the induction checklist, to show they understand the information.

This should not be a 'tick and flick' exercise. Discuss the content and ask them questions to make sure they understand what is required of them or explained to them.

Remember new workers (especially if they're young) may be nervous, or keen to impress, so they may not ask you questions. Encourage them to talk to you, their supervisor or WHS representative if they're not sure about anything.

## Keep records

If you've been following this series, you know we stress the importance of keeping records. It's as simple as keeping a copy of the signed induction checklist you use for each worker, contractor and visitor. Give them a copy, too.

If you explain lots of information, and the checklist is more like a summary, keep a copy of your background notes or material.

*Note: In the construction industry, there are other, more specific requirements, including the need to hold a Construction Induction Card ('white card'). For that specific information, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'white card'.*

# Safe workplaces + alcohol and drugs don't mix

Construction sites can be some of the most dangerous places to work, and the last 25 years have guidelines and legislation introduced to improve safety on site.

Now construction workers undergo safety training throughout their careers to ensure they and their work mates are safe. Part of this essential training covers the use of drugs and alcohol on site, and in Tasmania is supplied by the Incolink Wellbeing and Support team.

This experienced team delivers the Incolink Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention Program education sessions in TasTAFE for apprentices, and on construction and allied trade worksites and workplaces. The program has operated successfully with the support of unions and employers in the building and construction industry for over 20 years. In Tasmania, the program is funded by the WorkCover Tasmania Board and is available to all apprentices.

Apprentices taking part in the training will learn:

- why it's important to find out about the drug and alcohol policy at their place of work
- strategies for staying safe with drugs and alcohol, both at work and outside of work
- their body's processing times for drugs and alcohol, and how understanding these can help keep them safe
- finding support networks (in and outside Incolink) to help with alcohol and drug misuse

- supporting mates and colleagues in mental health, alcohol and drugs and other issues.

As well as delivering these education, prevention and awareness sessions, Incolink's Wellbeing and Support team can offer workplaces practical guidance, including:

- help developing and implementing a workplace-based alcohol and other drugs policy
- information and support for employers and union officials about workplace drugs and alcohol issues
- confidential counselling to Incolink members and their families who may be experiencing alcohol and drug issues
- confidential interventions and supported referrals to access support services.

Incolink also offers counselling to its members and their families for issues such as relationship difficulties, stress, depression, anxiety, anger, grief and loss. Financial Rights support is also available for members experiencing debt crisis.

*This article was supplied by Incolink, recipient of a grant from the WorkCover Tasmania Board. For more information go to [www.incolink.org.au](http://www.incolink.org.au) or call 0419 568 605.*

For more guidance and practical resources for managing drugs and alcohol in your workplace, go to WorkSafe's website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'drugs'.



# Improving health and safety for young construction workers

If injury rates in the construction industry are to improve, site inductions and training need to be better. Young workers must also get more involved in WHS and be encouraged to speak up.

These are the findings of the 'Improving the health and safety capabilities of young construction workers' project, delivered last year as an initiative of the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA).

## Injury rates

Disappointingly, nearly a quarter of workers had already suffered a work-related injury, with most saying they mostly or always modelled their behaviour on more experienced colleagues.

Young Tasmanian construction workers aged 15 to 24 have the highest claim rates, over 50 for every 1,000 workers and over 120 claims a year. They're almost twice as likely to make a claim as their colleagues outside this age bracket.

Young workers are particularly vulnerable to workplace injuries because of their inexperience, the type of work they perform, and their reluctance to ask questions or speak up about unsafe work.

## What was surveyed

The project involved young workers and their supervisors being interviewed at 65 construction worksites in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Information was sought on issues such as:

- the effectiveness of workplace systems, policies and procedures
- self-reported capabilities of young workers and their supervisors/managers

- whether young workers felt comfortable asking questions or raising concerns
- the extent to which young workers modelled their behaviour on experienced workers
- compliance with basic WHS duties
- factors that helped or hindered young worker safety on site.

## Findings

The results show most young workers can identify their work supervisor, mentor and site safety officer, but some are not aware of any health and safety representative. They realise work safety is vital, but believe barriers exist in achieving results.

Disappointingly, only a third of worksites provide a specific site induction for young workers, and sub-contractors aren't always aware of site-specific requirements for instruction and training.

Most supervisors acknowledged that more training for young workers was needed, but some were critical of their younger colleague for being stubborn, fearless and less concerned about site safety. The young tradies said good relationships with colleagues, building their skills and expertise, and having a say on safety issues were important.

Some good examples of work safety practices revealed during the project included:

- placing stickers on hard hats or providing different coloured hard hats for young workers
- site quizzes and videos
- mentoring or buddy programs (including young workers in site safety walks)

- guest presentations by people who had suffered a life-changing workplace injury.

## Key learnings

The findings demonstrate the important role managers and supervisors play, and highlight the need for the industry to:

- improve inductions, training, supervision, support and mentoring for young workers
- empower them to speak up, question and be involved in decisions about WHS issues
- build the capabilities of supervisors and managers to better engage with young workers
- develop a culture that values and supports the health and safety capabilities of young workers.

*This article is based on information from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's eSAFE Construction March newsletter. Go to [www.worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au) and search for 'eSAFE'.*

## What you can do

If you have young workers, get them a copy of WorkSafe Tasmania's 'Welcome to the Workplace: A health and safety guide for new workers'. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'GB140'.

While you're on the website, get induction checklists to guide you both through the process. Search for 'sample forms' and follow that result finding.

Finally for construction-industry specific information, go to <http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/safety/industry/construction> — you'll find 'Part B' with sample site rules.

## Case study:

# Worker pinned under trailer ramp

## What happened?

A truck driver was working in a remote area, getting ready to load an excavator onto his truck's trailer. As he walked under the raised steel ramp; it fell and pinned him beneath. He was knocked unconscious.

The excavator operator found the driver and saw he was turning blue in the face. The operator raised the fallen ramp and tried to call emergency services. The driver began breathing again and regained consciousness.

Ambulance Tasmania, the State Emergency Service, Tasmania Fire Service and Tasmania Police attended the scene.

## What injuries occurred?

The truck driver was taken to hospital, and found to be suffering multiple injuries, requiring a lengthy recovery period.

## Any contributing factors?

It was found that the power take off drive from the truck and the power source that drives the hydraulic pump was not engaged, and therefore the hydraulic system was not pressurised.

This would explain why the ramp fell while the truck driver was making his preparations.

## How was this problem fixed?

The workplace:

- had the truck's hydraulics fixed to include safety devices to prevent this happening again
- developed a safe operating procedure that includes having a 'no go zone' around the area the ramps lower to
- ensured no workers would be alone in remote areas without phone contact or access to emergency assistance. It has bought satellite phones and personal satellite GPS messengers.

## What can you do?

Here are some relevant codes of practice that have practical guidance to help you prevent this happening in your workplace.

- Managing the Risks of Plant in the Workplace (CP123): details specific control measures required under the regulations for plant. Includes an extensive hazard checklist and

a summary of relevant Australian Standards for further reference (organised by plant type)

- How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks (CP112): practical advice for identifying hazards in your workplace, doing risk assessments, and developing control measures. Includes a risk register template and case studies
- Managing the Work Environment and Facilities (CP124): explains how to provide and maintain a physical work environment that is without risks to health and safety. Includes an extensive checklist for auditing your workplace.

You'll find these at the WorkSafe website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) — search for the code numbers given above.

If you need further help understanding plant safety or managing safety in your workplace, talk to our Helpline or request a free visit from one of our Safety Advisors. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'request a visit'.



# Identifying bullying in your workplace

*This is an excerpt from WorkSafe's guide 'How to prevent and manage workplace bullying'. To get your copy of the full guide plus posters to display in your workplace, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying) or call our Helpline on 1300 366 322.*

There's a risk of workplace bullying wherever people work together. There may not be obvious signs of bullying at your workplace, but this doesn't mean it's not happening.

Workplace bullying is best dealt with by preventing it before it creates a risk to WHS. The first step is to identify the potential for workplace bullying, or if it's already occurring.

## How to identify workplace bullying

- Regularly consult with your workers, managers, supervisors, health and safety representatives, and health and safety committees. You might consider conducting an anonymous survey.
- Get feedback from workers who leave the business; for example, through exit interviews.
- Monitor incident reports, workers compensation claims, patterns of absenteeism, sick leave, staff

turnover, and records of grievances. This may show regular patterns or sudden unexplained changes.

- Recognise any changes in workplace relationships between workers, customers and managers.

## Contributing factors

The following factors may increase the risk of workplace bullying. Do you have these in your workplace?

### Work stressors

High job demands, limited job control, organisational change (such as restructuring, downsizing or significant technological change), role conflict and ambiguity, job insecurity, an acceptance of unreasonable behaviours or lack of behavioural standards, unreasonable expectations of clients or customers.

### Leadership styles

Autocratic behaviour that is strict and directive and does not allow workers to be involved in decision making.

Behaviour where little or no guidance is provided to workers; or responsibilities are inappropriately and informally delegated to subordinates.

Abusive behaviour.

## Systems of work

Lack of resources, lack of training, poorly designed rostering, inappropriate scheduling and shiftwork, unreasonable performance measures or timeframes.

## Workplace relationships

Poor communication, isolation, low levels of support, work group hostility.

## At-risk workers

Workers who are more at risk of workplace bullying include casual workers, young workers, new workers, apprentices/trainees, older workers, injured workers and workers on return to work plans, piece workers, and workers in a minority group because of their ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexual preferences.

## Key actions to take:

- Consult or survey your workplace, including those leaving your workplace
- Check reporting systems
- Look for work stressors
- Examine leadership styles
- Review systems of work
- Check workplace relationships
- Identify at-risk workers



# WorkSafe Month 2017: *What's on the agenda*

We can reveal to you some of the exciting events on offer for WorkSafe Month 2017!

## Major WorkSafe Expo

Our big-ticket item is an expo in Hobart to inspire, educate and equip you to build a safer and healthier workplace.

This free event will provide you with direct information about safety, wellbeing and return to work products and services in the market, all in one convenient location. There'll be local and interstate exhibitors ready to talk to you about solutions for your workplace needs.

We'll also have interactive seminars, forums and other opportunities to network, learn and discuss safety, health

and wellbeing — with business leaders, experts and others in your industry.

We're confident this event will give you even more tools and resources for managing safety, wellbeing and return to work in your workplace.

## Breakfast forums

Get your day off to a thought-provoking start with our regional breakfast forums.

Scheduled for Ulverstone, Launceston and Hobart, these free events will offer up some lively debate about the current state of health, safety and wellbeing — and good coffee and brekky!

## Worksite visits

Our Better Work Tasmania program is giving you the opportunity to visit other

workplaces who are opening their doors to share their successful workplace initiatives and solutions.

See what's worked for others in managing WHS — maybe their solutions could work for you too.

## Online tools

WorkSafe Month 2017 will again offer free online learning options, providing direct access to Safe Work Australia's online seminars and podcasts featuring experts and business leaders.

Watch this space and our website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) for details as they develop.



# Build a wellbeing program: Why workplace wellbeing?

*This is the first in a new series that will help you build your workplace wellbeing program. In this edition, we look at the benefits of addressing health and wellbeing at work, and the links to WHS.*

With Australians spending about one third of their lives at work, it makes good sense to consider the workplace as an important setting to improve health and wellbeing.

## What are the benefits?

Businesses that implement workplace wellbeing programs are known to have:

- increased worker morale and engagement
- reduced workplace injuries and associated expenses
- increased attraction and retention of workers
- improved corporate image.

Research has shown that healthier workers are more productive and more engaged in their work. They also have less sick leave, and greater levels of energy and concentration.

In short, a healthy workplace is good for business.

## Need more proof?

- Workplaces that don't promote wellbeing are four times more likely to lose talent within 12 months.
- Healthy workers are almost three times more productive than unhealthy workers.
- Workers at organisations that actively promote wellbeing are

three times more likely to identify their workplace as a high or above-average performer.

- A 20% reduction in a worker's emotional wellbeing leads to a 10% drop in their work performance.

## The link to safety

While WHS has a legislated position in Australian workplaces, the emphasis has traditionally been on the 'health and safety' of workers, rather than their 'health and wellbeing'. However, recognition of the benefits of workplace wellbeing programs is now gaining momentum.

Responding to the shift towards wellbeing, many Australian organisations are making the direct link between a safe worker and a healthy worker, recognising they are one and the same.

Best-practice workplaces are now integrating workplace health, safety and wellbeing into their management practices. Healthy workers are fitter, more aware and alert, more resilient against illness, and less likely to suffer manual handling injuries or strains. This makes them safer workers.

## Why invest in wellbeing?

Given the close link between healthy workers and business performance, a workplace wellbeing program has the potential to have a positive impact on your business productivity.

In the short term, the success of your wellbeing program will be demonstrated

by improvements in the way your workers work together, engage in their jobs, and enjoy their work.

In the long term, you should see the positive influence of your program on your business performance through gains in staff retention, improved efficiency, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, and fewer disability claims.

Some of these improvements are harder to measure than others, but each will contribute to improving your business bottom line.

## Business performance fast facts

- For every dollar invested in workplace wellbeing programs, there is a return on investment of between three and six dollars.
- Reduced performance costs employers two to seven times more than absenteeism.
- In 2012–13, the cost of work-related injury and illness in Australia was estimated to be \$61.8 billion (4.1% of GDP).
- The greater the number of health risks for a worker, the greater the negative impact on their productivity.
- Implementing a health and wellbeing program can reduce worker risk factors by up to 56%.

*Facts and statistics from 'Your simple guide to workplace health and wellbeing' at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au). 2012–13 GDP statistic from Safe Work Australia at [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au).*

# Everybody's Talking...

## Questions and answers from our Helpline / 1300 366 322

### **I'm coming to Tasmania to do fruit picking. What sort of accommodation and facilities should I expect?**

If a business has workers working in regional and remote areas, accommodation may need to be provided while the work is being done. Examples include providing accommodation to fruit pickers like yourself during the harvesting season, shearers on a sheep station, or workers doing construction work at a remote location.

Where reasonably practicable, your accommodation should be separated from any hazards at the workplace likely to adversely affect your health and safety. They should also:

- be lockable, with safe entry and exit
- meet all relevant structural and stability requirements
- meet electrical and fire safety standards
- have a supply of drinking water
- have appropriate toilets, washing and laundry facilities
- be regularly cleaned and have rubbish collected
- have suitable sleeping quarters shielded from noise and vibration
- have crockery, utensils and dining facilities
- have adequate lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation
- have storage cupboards and other suitable furniture
- have a refrigerator or cool room
- have all fittings, appliances and equipment in good condition.

This is set out in the Managing the Work Environment and Facilities code of practice; go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'CP124'.

### **What sort of health monitoring should be done at workplaces?**

There are four specified circumstances that the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 requires health monitoring and record keeping for:

- **hazardous chemicals:** Schedule 14 of the Regulations lists certain hazardous chemicals and requirements where there is significant risk of exposure to these. You must keep records from health monitoring for 30 years. You must notify WorkSafe Tasmania if any monitoring report indicates that a worker has been affected by that chemical, or recommends any remedial measures to reduce or prevent further exposure
- **restricted carcinogens:** If your workplace has the authority to use, handle or store prohibited or restricted carcinogens, you must keep records of any worker who uses, handles or stores these products, and provide a statement to workers at the end of their employment/engagement with you
- **lead:** Part 7.2 of the Regulations has specific requirements for lead exposure. You must keep records from health monitoring for 30 years. You must notify WorkSafe Tasmania if a worker's blood levels exceed specified levels, or remedial action is recommended by a health professional

- **asbestos:** Regulation 435 requires health monitoring for workers doing asbestos-related work to start before they begin this work. You must keep records from this monitoring for 40 years. You must notify WorkSafe Tasmania if the report indicates a worker has been affected by the exposure, or recommends any remedial measures.

### **I used to notify WorkSafe when I was starting a construction project valued at \$250,000 or more, but I've heard I no longer need to do so. Is that true?**

Yes it is! This requirement was removed when the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* and its regulations began in Tasmania in January 2013.

However, projects over \$250,000 require the appointment of a principal contractor, and site WHS management plans and safe work method statements may still be required for your project. You are to keep these documents on site for workers, contractors, visitors and others to use and be safe.

You still need to notify WorkSafe about certain demolition work; for example, demolitions involving explosives.

You can find all these requirements in detail, plus practical guidance to comply with them, in:

- WorkSafe's 'Your guide to managing safety in housing and construction'. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'GB310'
- the codes of practice for Construction Work and Demolition Work. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'codes 2016'.



# What's the workers comp premium rate for your industry?

## How do I find details about what I have accrued under the Long Service Leave Act 1976?

Go to your employer. You can inspect your own records at any reasonable time.

Your employer must keep long service leave records with these details:

- their name and address
- your name, address and position
- the date your employment began
- details of any additional period of employment to be served, due to an absence or interruption that does not count towards 'continuous employment'
- the end date of the qualifying period, after allowing for any additional period(s) required to be served
- details of leave you've taken: start and finishing date, number of days taken, amount paid and method of payment
- details of termination of your employment: date, reasons, and rate of ordinary pay at the date of termination.

Accurate records are important, particularly if there's any dispute.

Your employer should also understand that if the business is sold from one employer to another, then the staff records need to be transferred from the old owner to the new.

For the relevant laws and more information, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'long service'.

Each year, WorkSafe Tasmania publishes a set of suggested industry premium rates for workers compensation for each industry.

The purpose of this is to better inform the marketplace of the cost of workers compensation insurance cover:

- licensed insurers may use these suggested rates as a guide to setting their premiums for the following year
- employers may refer to these suggested rates as they consider quotes for workers compensation from insurance companies.

## How to use them

If you're an employer, ask your insurer or broker for the ANZSIC code your business falls under (see How are the rates determined? below), then go to the WorkCover Tasmania website at [www.workcover.tas.gov.au](http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au) and search for 'suggested industry premium rates'.

For example, if you're in the clothes retailing business, your ANZSIC code is 4251, and you can use this to quickly find the suggested rate for 2017–18 for your industry.

## Why they're 'suggested'

It's important to note that the suggested rates are a guide only. The actual rates charged by insurance companies to individual employers may differ from the suggested rates, with each insurance company taking into account the industry and employer's risk factors, past claims and WHS circumstances.

However, if the actual premium you're charged for your workers compensation cover differs significantly from the suggested rate, or if you have any concerns regarding the premium rate

you are being charged, you should contact your insurance company or broker to get clarification.

## How are the rates determined?

It's complicated! The risk factors and the claims history and costs for each industry are considered; then the future claim numbers and costs for the industry are estimated.

To calculate each industry's 'gross premium', an estimated percentage for insurer expenses and insurer profits is added to determine the total required premium pool.

The premium pool is then divided by what the estimated wages will be for the industry in the subsequent year.

The result is a premium expressed as a percentage of wages.

Industries are grouped according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) system, where each industry is assigned an individual four-digit ANZSIC code. You can find more about ANZSIC on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

# The safest tool to use when dealing with asbestos.



Asbestos can lay dormant in many older Tasmanian homes and workplaces. It's a hazardous material, especially when it's disturbed or removed.

Asbestos can be found in bathrooms and kitchens, under vinyl floors, carpet underlay, guttering, roof sheeting and more.

So whether you're a DIY renovator or a professional tradie, if you think asbestos might be present, the

safest tool to use is your mobile phone to access accurate information that could save your life.

Get the cold hard facts on asbestos by visiting [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety) or call **1300 366 322**.

