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A line graph is plotted on a light blue grid background. The line starts at the bottom left, rises to a peak, dips slightly, and then rises more steeply towards the top right corner of the grid.

# Asbestos management in your community

Improving the lives of Australians



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## What is asbestos?

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- It is a natural mineral from the ground
- It was mined in Australia until 1983
- It is made up of tiny fibres



## Why was it used?

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- Asbestos is naturally heat and acid resistant, so it was mixed with other materials to make many products including:
  - building materials, cement sheeting, floor tiles, water pipes
  - insulation in buildings
  - car and truck brake pads.
- Asbestos containing materials are be found in a lot of older houses across Australia



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## Vinyl floor sheeting

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## Cement sheet cladding





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## Why is asbestos hazardous?

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- Asbestos dust contains tiny fibres
- It can be a health risk if material containing the asbestos is disturbed or crushed, releasing tiny fibres into the air
- If you breathe a lot of the tiny asbestos fibres they might damage your lungs and make you sick
- Skin contact or swallowing asbestos is not associated with respiratory disease



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## Asbestos debris

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- Debris is broken asbestos products which have been removed from buildings and are lying around on the floor or the ground
- If you see anything you think is asbestos debris, the best thing to do is to leave it alone





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## Examples of asbestos debris

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Old  
asbestos  
pipes





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## Broken pieces of cement sheeting from buildings

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Cement sheeting







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## Asbestos management – what's it all about?

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- The Australian and Northern Territory Governments are serious about addressing community concerns relating to asbestos
- Your health and safety is of primary concern
- The first steps towards managing asbestos in your community is to have specialist surveyors complete inspections to identify all asbestos and record the details in a Register – which is what we are about to complete



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## Asbestos follow-up survey

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- Professional surveyors visited your community some time ago to start finding any asbestos
- The surveyors could not get access to some buildings at the time and more areas have been found that need to be checked
- A follow-up survey is now needed to make sure all of the community has been inspected



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## When will this follow-up survey be done?

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- The asbestos surveyors will be in your community very soon
- Arrangements are being made to make sure the surveyors can inspect the buildings they couldn't get into last time
- We will put up posters telling you the dates the surveyors will be in the community



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## What will the surveyors be doing?

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- The surveyors will be looking at buildings, vacant lots and outdoor areas that have not been fully surveyed
- Some buildings may only need to be checked on the inside
- Other buildings may also need a check of the surrounding grounds
- They may take some samples of materials to be checked to see if they are asbestos but they won't damage anything to get these samples



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## What if they find some asbestos?

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- Asbestos is found in a lot of older houses across Australia and can be successfully managed
- If asbestos is found in your community, the details will be recorded in an Asbestos Register
- The Register will contain recommendations from the specialist surveyors on how to manage the asbestos now and in the future
- Do not try to remove asbestos yourself





## What happens after the survey?

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- If the surveyors find asbestos that poses an immediate risk, steps will be taken to make sure the risk is minimised until the ACM can be removed by a licensed removalist (as soon as possible)
- If the surveyors find asbestos with some potential to pose an unacceptable risk if it is further damaged, steps will be taken to have it removed over the next 12 – 18 months
- Once the schedule for removal work is finalised you will be advised of proposed dates for you community



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## After the survey (continued)

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- Asbestos that the surveyors decide is not an immediate or unacceptable risk if left undisturbed will be recorded in the Asbestos Register for future management
- Where possible, buildings with remaining asbestos will have signs placed on them to make sure everyone is aware of the presence of asbestos
- If no asbestos is found in your community, we will let you know that no further action is required



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## For more information

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- Please contact your GBM
- Please encourage other members of your community to contact your GBM if they have questions
- It is important everyone knows and understands what's going on