Hazardous Building Materials Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure all [risks](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) associated with [hazardous building materials](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) within the Department of Education and Training (the Department) are identified and managed.

Scope

This procedure applies to all the Department workplaces, including schools and central and regional offices.

Procedure

## 3.1 Identifying and Assessing Hazardous Building Materials

The[Workplace Manager](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) and/or [Management OHS Nominees](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) are to contact the Department’s Asbestos, Reinstatement and Preventative Maintenance Call Centre on ph.1300 133 468 to identify the presence of hazardous building materials within the workplace. The results of this assessment should be recorded in a hazardous building material report provided by Cushman and Wakefield.

Hazardous building materials that may be identified include:

* [Asbestos](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) (friable and non-friable)
* [Polychlorinated Biphenyls](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) (PCB)
* [Synthetic Mineral Fibres](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) (SMFs)
* [Lead based paint](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx)
* [Copper Chromium Arsenate (CCA) –treated timber](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx)

3.1.1 Asbestos

Asbestos are naturally occurring fibrous silicate materials that have been banned for use in Australia since 31 December 2003. The three types of asbestos commonly used in Australia were: Crocidolite (blue asbestos), Amosite (brown asbestos), and Chrysotile (white asbestos). Asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in schools and other Department workplaces could include:

* Splashback / glue to urinals and behind ceramic tiles
* Cement flue to heating unit
* Eaves and infill panels
* Floor steps
* Ceiling and walls.

The Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) conduct a program of regular asbestos auditing in Department workplaces. A copy of the school’s Division 5 Audit Report Schools can be downloaded by going to the School Maintenance System portal: <https://prms21.eduweb.vic.gov.au/SMS/>.

When asbestos-containing material is identified, the **Workplace Manager** and/or Asbestos Coordinator is to record it in the *OHS Risk Register* and develop a *School Asbestos Management Plan (SAMP)* using the Department’s *Schools Asbestos Management Plan* template.

Schools and other Department workplaces are expected to implement appropriate actions in order to reduce the risks of exposure to asbestos fibres to employees, contractors, volunteers, students and visitors, while on site.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are required to provide current copies of the Division 5 and Division 6 Asbestos Audit Report and SAMP as part of their OHS induction to all persons who come on site prior to commencing work that could potentially disturb ACMs.

3.1.2 Polychlorinated Biphenyls

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) are a group of chemical substances classified as probable human carcinogens. Other potential health effects include; irritation of the nose, lung and skin where people have been exposed to PCBs over long periods of time.

PCBs are persistent in the environment and can build up in the food chain. Due to concerns about health effects, the importation and manufacture of PCBs in Australia have been banned since the 1970s.

PCBs were widely used in electrical equipment due to their good insulating, fire resistant and dielectric properties. Polychlorinated Biphenyls -containing material, however, may still be found in some electrical supply and telecommunications equipment such as transformers, generators and capacitors.

**Note:** All Department schools have been audited for PCBs and schools have received relevant reports. It should be noted that all PCBs have been removed from school buildings as part of the Department’s Environment Improvement Plan.

3.1.3 Synthetic Mineral Fibres

Synthetic Mineral Fibres (SMFs) are man-made mineral fibres (MMMF) and include glassfibre, rockwool, slagwool and refractory ceramic fibres (RCF). No form of SMF has been classified as being confirmed human carcinogens, although concerns remain for specific types such as more bio-persistent RCF.

Synthetic Mineral Fibres has become an important replacement for asbestos in a variety of products where thermal insulation, acoustic insulation, or electrical or fire protection is required.

SMF can cause irritation to the skin and eyes. In excessive dusty conditions, they may cause upper respiratory tract irritation. Thus, SMF which has been incorporated into a stable bonded mat (and remains stable), presents no potential health risks unless disturbed by cutting, etc. Also important is the shape, size and durability of fibres.

Some people are particularly sensitive and will need to take precautions to protect their skin. Smoking may act to increase the adverse effect of some airborne substances in the workplace such as asbestos but there has been no proven link between SMF, smoking, and health effects.

3.1.4 Lead-Based Paint

Paints used in buildings constructed before 1970 are likely to contain high lead concentrations (typically above 1% lead concentration). Before 1950, certain paints contained as much as 50% lead. Lead-containing paints are one of the major sources of lead in the environment.

Lead-based paint is most likely to be found on window frames, doors, skirting boards, kitchen and bathroom cupboards, exterior walls, gutters and fascia and metal surfaces. Lead becomes a problem only if it is damaged or disturbed.

Lead can be inhaled or swallowed when a process generates lead dust, fumes or mists, and long-term exposure can cause a range of health problems, including gastrointestinal problems, kidney disease, nerve and brain damage.

Lead paints that are flaking could create risks to young children who suffer from pica (a serious eating disorder that can sometimes result in serious health problems such as lead poisoning).

Lead-based paint in good condition is usually not a problem, except in places where painted surfaces are subject to friction or impact such as windows and doors. To avoid lead poisoning, it is critical not to sand or burn off lead-based paint.

3.1.5 CCA-treated timber

Copper chrome arsenate (CCA)-treated timber is wood that has been treated with a preservative containing copper, chromium and arsenic. Copper is a fungicide, arsenic prevents insect attacks and chromium binds the two chemicals to the timber and reduces the risk of the chemicals leaching out. CCA treatment prolongs the life of the wood and gives the treated wood a green tint. If the timber is burnt, the smoke and ash contain high concentrations of arsenic.

CCA-treated timber can harm people if

* it is absorbed through skin while working with CCA treated timber
* excessive amounts of sawdust are inhaled or swallowed when cutting CCA treated timber
* you are exposed to ash from burning CCA treated timber
* you have frequent contact with soil that has been mulched with CCA treated timber woodchips or sawdust

In relation to CCA-treated timber, the Department does not allow copper chromium arsenate to be used in any exposed location where students or members of the public are likely to come into intimate and frequent contact. This means CCA-treated timber must not be used to build playground equipment, handrails, exterior furniture, planter boxes or seating.

Arsenic-free alternative timber treatment products are available and registered for use in Australia.

## 3.2 Communication of Hazardous Building Materials

The workplace hazardous building material report and *School Asbestos Management Plan* (SAMP) must be made available to all visitors, volunteer workers and contractors who may come into contact with hazardous building materials. The report contains a risk assessment and details of control measures for all identified hazardous building materials.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to communicate the information contained within the hazardous building material report and SAMP as per the *OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure*. As a minimum communication is to occur with:

* Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)
* Health and Safety Committee (if applicable)
* Employees
* Volunteers
* Contractors.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that as a minimum the communication takes into account:

* the location and condition of hazardous building materials
* the risk of adverse health impacts associated with coming in contact with hazardous building materials
* the controls that are to applied to eliminate and/or reduce the risk of adverse health impacts
* information relating to the type of potential health impacts for each of the hazardous building materials.

## 3.3 Controlling Risks Posed by Hazardous Building Materials

## 3.3.1 Control Measures

Where specific hazardous building materials have been identified, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS nominee** must ensure that they are recorded in the workplace *OHS Risk Register.*

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS nominee** in consultation with the HSR and employees must establish and implement controls for identified hazardous building materials risk management. A record of these controls must be documented in the *OHS Risk Register.*

When determining controls to manage hazardous building material risks, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must follow the [hierarchy of control](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) outlined in *OHS Risk Management Procedure*. Examples of effective hazardous building material controls (from most to least effective) may include:

* elimination of asbestos by a contractor who holds an asbestos licence; (See Schools Asbestos Management Plan)
* painting over lead based paint with an encapsulant. Not any typical paint will cover lead-based paint. To make sure that the paint, dust, and fumes are carefully controlled, a special type of paint known as an encapsulant must be used. It's applied over the lead-based paint as a sealant to prevent paint chips or dust from being breathed in or escaping. Encapsulation provides a barrier between the paintand the environment. Conventional paint is **NOT** an encapsulant.
* conducting monitoring checks to determine actual exposure (see *Hygiene Management Procedure*)
* using the *Safe Work Procedure Template* develop Safe Work Procedures for performing tasks on or adjacent to hazardous building materials
* if reasonably practicable indicate hazardous building materials by labelling
* providing [Personal Protective Equipment](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) (PPE) e.g. neoprene or nitrile gloves.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Asbestos Coordinator** are to schedule hazardous building materials inspections in the *OHS Activities Calendar*.The condition of hazardous building materials is to be inspected on a quarterly basis at a minimum.

**Note:** External competent persons are to be engaged and managed as per the requirements of *Contractor OHS Management Procedure* and *School Asbestos Management Plan*.

**Note:** Asbestos can only be removed by an asbestos-licensed holder. Department workplaces must follow the *School Asbestos Management Plan* for requirements on ACM removal.

3.3.2 Location of Hazardous Building Materials

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must ensure that all employees, contractors, volunteer workers and visitors are aware of the location of hazardous building materials in the workplace.

Where relevant, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that the location of hazardous building materials is communicated and included as part of induction in the *OHS Induction Checklist*, *Volunteer Worker OHS Induction Checklist* and *Contractor OHS Induction Checklist.*

3.3.3 Training on Hazardous Building Materials

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure the workplace nominated Asbestos Coordinator has attended the Department Asbestos Awareness Training (component of the Bricks and Mortar Training). This should be recorded in the *OHS Training Planner/Register.*

## 3.4 Reviewing Controls

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of hazard controls in consultation with the HSR and employees on an annual basis.

## 3.5 OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to ensure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date and is reviewed when hazardous building materials are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.

If the *OHS Risk Register* refers to the hazardous building material report for further detail, then the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to ensure that the hazardous building material report is kept up to date.

Defined terms

Terms defined within this Procedure can be located on the Department’s [Defined Health, Safety Terms](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) website. Defined roles will appear **in bold**.

Related references

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

[*Victorian School Building Authority: Asbestos in Soils Policy*](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sc/sites/Infonline/Policies%20Guidelines%20and%20Procedures/Asbestos_in_Soils_Policy.docx)

[*Victorian School Building Authority: Fill on School Sites Policy*](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sc/sites/Infonline/Policies%20Guidelines%20and%20Procedures/Fill_on_school_sites_Policy.docx)

[*Victorian School Building Authority: Asbestos Management and Removal Policy*](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sc/sites/Infonline/Policies%20Guidelines%20and%20Procedures/Asbestos_management_policy.docx)

[*Victorian School Building Authority: Building Quality Standards Handbook May 2018*](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/infrastructure/BuildingQualStandHdbk%202018.pdf)

[*Victorian School Building Authority: Hazardous Materials Policy*](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sc/sites/Infonline/Policies%20Guidelines%20and%20Procedures/Hazardous_materials_policy.docx)

*Managing Asbestos in Workplaces – WorkSafe Compliance Code*

*Removing Asbestos in Workplaces – WorkSafe Compliance Code*

Related documentation

*Contractor OHS Management Procedure*

*Contractor OHS Induction Checklist*

*Hygiene Management Procedure*

*OHS Activities Calendar*

*OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure*

*OHS Induction Checklist*

*OHS Induction and Training Procedure*

*OHS Risk Management Procedure*

*OHS Risk Registe*r

*OHS Training Planner/Register*

*Safe Work Procedure Template*

*Schools Asbestos Management Plan Template*

*Volunteer Worker OHS Induction Checklist*

Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to Hazardous Building Materials management is available by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au.