

press clip



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Asbestos awareness

WITH as many as one in three Australian homes containing asbestos, Asbestos Awareness Week (November 21 - 27) aims to educate handymen, women, homeowners and their children about the risks of being exposed to asbestos fibres.

In 2008, a study by Professor Anthony Johnson showed 60.5 per cent of do-it-yourself renovators reported being exposed to asbestos during home renovations.

Fifty-three per cent reported their partner and 40pc reported their children were also exposed to asbestos during home DIY home renovations.

Visit asbestosawareness.com.au.



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press clip

Don't mess with silent killer

If a home was built or renovated in the years leading up to 1985, it most likely contains asbestos.



Nico van Zandwijk

NEXT Monday the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute will be launching a week-long campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of working with asbestos.

The aim is to help protect renovators and homeowners from asbestos-related diseases and we'll be asking people to think smart, think safe, think asbestosawareness.com.au - it's not worth the risk!

One in three Australian homes contain asbestos. During Asbestos Awareness Week (November 21 to 27), and particularly in the lead-up to Christmas when many people undertake home maintenance and renovations in preparation for the holiday season, our aim is to educate handymen, women and homeowners about the risks of being exposed to asbestos fibres so they can protect themselves and their families from asbestos dust and fibres.

We know that many Australians unknowingly put their health and the health of their children and neighbours at risk because they don't really understand the dangers of working with asbestos or where it might be found in and around their home.

So we're urging homeowners and renovators, particularly young couples who often enjoy the

challenge of doing the work themselves and who are working within tight budgets, to ask themselves this very important question: "Could my home contain asbestos and could I be putting my health and the health of my family at risk by disturbing asbestos?"

If a home was built or renovated in the years leading up to 1985, it is likely to contain asbestos.

If left undisturbed it does not pose a health risk, but during renovations or the demolition of these homes, asbestos fibres can be released into the air and be inhaled, leading to such conditions as asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

The real issue with asbestos-related diseases is that the patients being diagnosed today were exposed to asbestos 20-40 years ago.

Thus, by educating families about the risks and preventative measures they can take today, we aim to reduce the number of Australians diagnosed with asbestos-related disease in the future.

During Asbestos Awareness Week, our message to all Australians who might be thinking of renovating, removing asbestos or working with asbestos around the home is to think smart, think safe, think asbestosawareness.com.au or you may be putting yourself and your loved ones at risk of developing asbestos-related diseases later in life.

We urge people from the Illawarra to visit asbestosawareness.com.au and learn where asbestos might be found in their homes and how to manage it safely.

Importantly, if you find asbestos in your home, don't cut it, don't drill it, don't drop it, don't sand it, don't saw it, don't scrape it, don't scrub it, don't dismantle it, don't tip it, don't waterblast it, don't demolish it, and whatever you do, don't dump it!

Most people can't tell whether building materials contain asbestos just by looking at them, so we want people to visit www.asbestosawareness.com.au for information on where asbestos might be found in and around your home, how best to manage it and useful links where you can find information about disposing of asbestos legally and safely.

Before you think about renovating or undertaking home maintenance projects around your home, think smart, think safe, think asbestosawareness.com.au - it's not worth the risk!

Professor van Zandwijk is director of the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute.