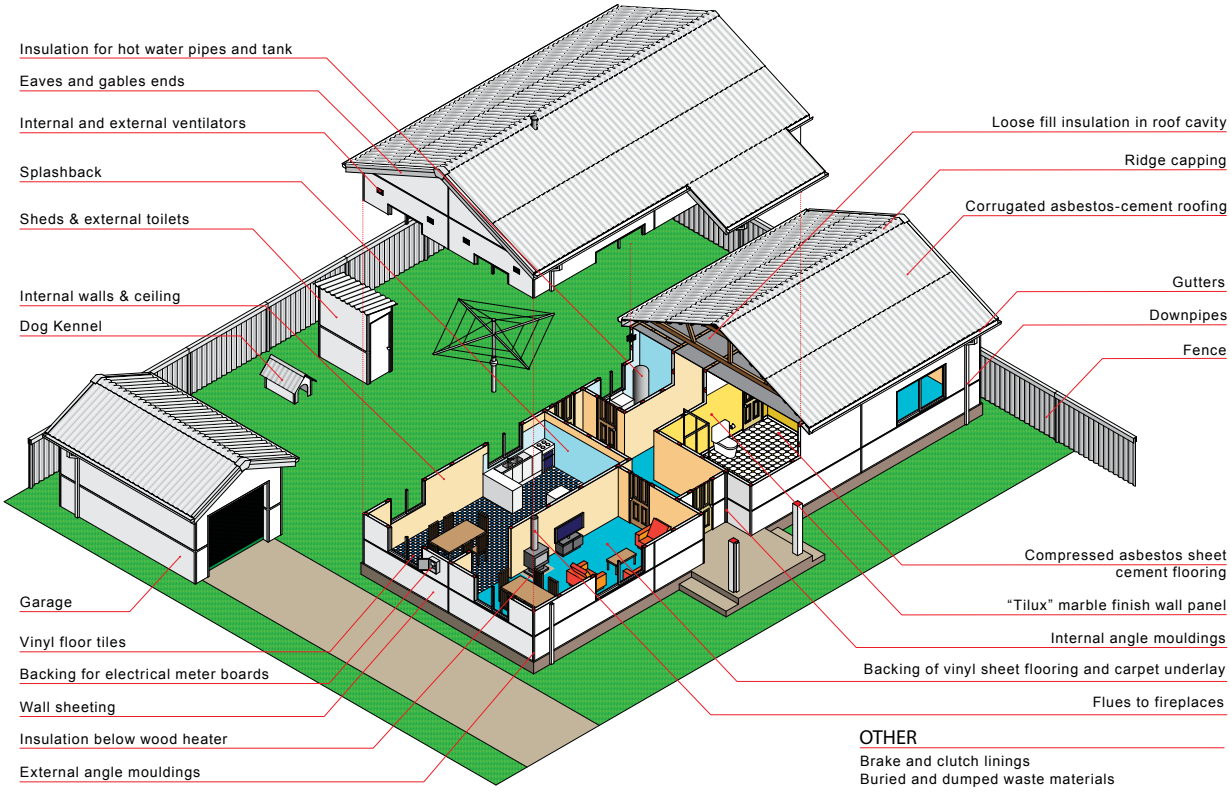
FACT SHEET

Asbestos

Asbestos has been used in thousands of homes throughout Australia. It is most commonly found in fibro. In 2003, the manufacture and supply of asbestos was banned.

WHERE ASBESTOS MAY BE FOUND IN A TYPICAL HOME



Health effects

Asbestos is a known carcinogen. The inhalation of asbestos fibres can cause mesothelioma, lung cancer, asbestosis and asbestos related pleural disease.

Always seek advice about suitable health and safety precautions before disturbing asbestos materials.
Visit www.health.nsw.gov.au for more information on the health effects of asbestos.

Safe management

Asbestos can release fibres into the air when disturbed. It is prevalent during the renovation and demolition of buildings containing asbestos, and when there is any direct action on the asbestos, such as drilling, boring, cutting, filing, brushing, grinding, sanding, breaking, smashing, blowing with compressed air and water blasting.

It is not always possible to detect asbestos just by looking at it. The best way to identify asbestos is by having a licensed asbestos removalist inspect it. If unsure whether a material contains asbestos, treat it as though it does.

Safe removal

Before renovating or doing maintenance work on your home, find out if it contains asbestos and know what to do to remove and dispose of it safely. If more than 10 square metres of bonded asbestos needs to be removed, you must engage a bonded asbestos removalist who is licensed by WorkCover.

Most building or demolition work requires some form of approval. Before erecting or demolishing a building, or making any alterations, find out from the local council if a development consent or complying development certificate is required.

Before any asbestos is removed, advise your neighbours of the time and date of removal, and the name of the licensed removalist.

For more information, see WorkCover's guide, *Working with asbestos* (catalogue no. WC05484).

Safe disposal

Asbestos is classified as a hazardous material. There are strict guidelines about how it should be packaged and transported, and where it can be disposed.

All asbestos must be specially wrapped, labelled and disposed of, as soon as possible, at a facility that can lawfully receive asbestos waste.

For more information, see *Safely disposing of asbestos waste in your home* at www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Who to contact?

Safe management of asbestos in your home

General asbestos safety issues	Local Council
Derelict properties	Local Council

Complaints about unsafe work at a residential property

Work conducted by a neighbour (including a home owner or tenant as part of home maintenance, renovation or small scale demolition)	Local Council
Work conducted by a contractor or worker	WorkCover NSW
Licensed removal work at a residence	WorkCover NSW

Transport and disposal

Safe disposal of waste	Environment Protection Authority
Landfill facilities in Sydney Metro	Environment Protection Authority
Landfill facilities in regional areas	Local Council

Further information

WorkCover NSW	13 10 50	www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
Environment Protection Authority	13 15 55	www.environment.nsw.gov.au
Ministry of Health		www.health.nsw.gov.au
NSW Government		www.nsw.gov.au/fibro
Safe Work Australia		www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au
Asbestos Education Committee		www.asbestosawareness.com.au

Local Government Association of NSW **WorkCover NSW** **Dust Diseases Board** **Ministry of Health**

Shires Association of NSW **Division of Local Government** **Trade & Investment, Resources & Energy**

Ministry for Police & Emergency Services **Environment Protection Authority** **Planning & Infrastructure**

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