

Fifty two per cent of samples tested positive for asbestos in 2019

Council is urging residents to be safe ahead of National Asbestos Awareness Month

In the lead up to National Asbestos Awareness Month, Tweed Shire Council is encouraging residents - particularly those who are looking at renovating - to find a licensed professional to take an asbestos sample test or to consider purchasing an 'asbestos testing kit' before making a start.

Asbestos test kits are available to Tweed residents at the cost price of only \$47.20 through Council, in conjunction with North East Waste.

Council's Resource Recovery Education Officer, Tarra Martel said it is important that home owners undertaking their own renovations know whether the materials they are removing contain asbestos.

"Asbestos can pose a health risk for the home owners but also for workers and staff at the waste facility who sort and process the waste. We really want to ensure people are testing their building materials before they start work, and before they bring it to the tip," Ms Martel said.

The asbestos testing kits provide easy step-by-step instructions on how to take samples safely. The kit includes a mask, sample bags and a pre-paid satchel. The samples are sent to a certified asbestos testing company and the results of the test are emailed to the resident.

"Seventy eight samples have been tested through the program this year with 52 per cent testing positive - that's 41 samples identified as containing asbestos. By taking this simple and effective precaution, the risk for the homeowners, as well as workers and staff on site has reduced significantly," she said.

There are some specific conditions for bringing asbestos to Stotts Creek Resource Recovery Centre (the tip), as follows:

- Asbestos is **ONLY** accepted on Monday – Friday, between the hours of 7am and 2.30pm, and not on weekends or public holidays. Advise Council 24 hours before bringing your load to the tip.
- More than 10 square metres of asbestos sheeting or 100kg must be transported by a licenced asbestos transporter who must track and report the origin and disposal location to the EPA using 'WasteLocate' (www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/waste/transporting-asbestos-waste-tyres/tracking-asbestos-waste-locate), to meet legal requirements.
- Wrap asbestos in heavy duty plastic and tape securely according to NSW legislation (proof of residency must be shown and different rates will apply depending on the load origin).
- Keep asbestos containing material separated from other building materials.
- Dampen asbestos to reduce dust but ensure water does not run off.
- Wrap asbestos pieces into manageable packages to ensure it can be unloaded without breaking open on site.
- Notify weighbridge staff when you arrive at the tip that you have asbestos in your load (this is monitored).

For further information about asbestos management or asbestos testing kits visit www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Asbestos or call (02) 6670 2400. Testing kits are available for purchase and drop off at the Murwillumbah Civic Centre.

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