

# ASBESTOS TESTING FOR HOUSEHOLDERS

## ASBESTOS IN THE HOME

Asbestos fibres may be present in a number of products found in the home. There is no safe level of exposure to asbestos fibres. Where householders decide to undertake work where asbestos is, or may be, present, a number of guides provide useful information to minimise the risks, as follows:

Guideline	Author	Source
Key 'DOS and DON'TS' for handling asbestos materials	Australian Government Department of Health	<a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a>
Asbestos: A guide for householders and the general public	Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth), Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, Canberra, 2013.	<a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a>
Asbestos cement products in your home	Government of Western Australia; Department of Health	<a href="http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au">www.public.health.wa.gov.au</a>
Asbestos Issues: Who Do You Call?	Government of Western Australia; Department of Health	

## ASBESTOS SAMPLING

Generally, a person cannot determine whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it. If in doubt, treat the suspect material as though it does contain asbestos.

ARL provides a NATA certified detailed visual examination and the use of a microscope by a trained laboratory technician to verify and report the presence of asbestos.

If you need to sample material suspected of containing asbestos for testing by ARL, the instructions below should be considered the minimum precautions you should take:

- Wear a suitable half-face disposable or cartridge-type particulate respirator (class P2) mask
- Dampen or wet the material
- Use pliers (non-serrated), with the inside edges protected with a wet wipe to break off a small thumbnail sized sample
- Place the sample (and the wet wipe) into a sealable polythene bag - such as a sandwich bag.
- Place the bagged sample inside another sealable bag
- Attach a label to the bag identifying the sample type (ceiling tile, fire board, etc) and your name and address
- Seal the broken area of the sampled material with duct tape, paint or PVC Glue to minimise fibre release
- Clean any tools used with water
- Send the material to ARL.

## REPORTING OF RESULTS BY ARL

After we receive the sample at ARL, it will take approximately 5 days to provide you with a brief Laboratory Report containing the results. The Laboratory Report will confirm or otherwise the presence of harmful asbestos fibres in your sample. The Laboratory Report will not be released until you have paid ARL.

ARL can only offer sampling, analytical testing and reporting of your potentially asbestos containing materials. We cannot make any recommendations or give advice on the health effects of the results obtained. For information regarding the possible health effects of asbestos, please refer to the guidelines above or contact the Department of Health or your local government environmental health advisor.