Build Back Better
Managing Asbestos Risk

This fact sheet provides information about asbestos risk and management

It may not be safe to enter your property at present. Please do not enter until it has been assessed as safe and you have been given permission to do so. There may be asbestos present or dangerous structures that could collapse and cause serious injury.

There is a high terminal risk to health from friable asbestos on many fire damaged buildings as well as a possibility of death or injury from sharp objects in the unstable ruins.

Asbestos removal is conducted under very strict protocols and can only be done by a licensed contractor.

What do I need to do to get the clean-up process started?

It’s very important to register for clean-up with Service NSW online:
https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/register-opt-nsw-bushfire-clean or call 13 77 88. When you do that, the managing clean-up contractor, Laing O’Rourke, will receive the information they need to contact you to begin discussing and planning the scope of works for your individual situation. If you have concerns about the outcome of that scoping discussion you can contact the Public Works Authority who will work through those issues with you. The key is to understand before those discussions, what you believe is reasonable to be included in the clean-up and be ready to discuss this with Laing O’Rourke when they make contact.

You can find more information about clean-up on Council’s Fire Recovery Support web pages.

It’s a good idea to get some legal advice before signing off on your clean-up Deed of Agreement and you can contact the LawAccess Helpline on 1300 888 529 for advice on accessing free legal help or drop in to see Legal Aid at the Bega Recovery Centre.

Clean-up work will include: removal of known hazardous materials, including asbestos; removal of materials destroyed by bush fire and hazardous trees near the destroyed or damaged primary residence or place of business; removal of damaged driveways that could impact on the safety of the clean-up; with consent of building owners, removal of concrete slab foundations.

What is the process for identifying asbestos?

Public Works Authority’s Building Impact Assessment team has completed asbestos evaluations and stabilisation in the region.

An initial assessment identifies hazards for property owners to be aware, with a Hazard Identification Notice displayed at assessed properties You can find out the status of your property by calling Service NSW on 13 77 88.

NSW Health: returning home safely after a bushfire (read before returning)

Asbestos clean-up and removal is being conducted by the NSW Government which is coordinating the free clean-up of NSW residences and eligible businesses impacted by the NSW bushfires. This includes both insured and uninsured properties. Register your details with Service NSW online:
Your demolition contractor will transport the asbestos to an approved Council waste facility. There will be no charge to dispose of your waste.

**My property is fire-affected but does not contain asbestos. What do I do?**


You can also check if you’re registered for the clean-up by calling Laing O’Rourke on 1800 007 539. Laing O'Rourke will pre-arrange any household visits and will not turn up unannounced or demand payment.

You can find out where the clean-up program is at and the estimated timings for the Bega Valley Shire on the NSW Bushfire Clean-up Info Hub [www.cleanup.lnbr.com.au](http://www.cleanup.lnbr.com.au) or: Call: 1800 007 539 or Email: nswbushfirecleanup@laingorourke.com.au

**What waste facilities in the Shire accept asbestos?**

Council is working with the NSW Government to use the shire’s Central Waste Facility (CWF) on Wanatta Lane, North West of Wolumla, to take the estimated 140,000 cubic metres of waste and damaged building material as part of the bushfire clean-up.

Around 70,000 cubic metres of the material needing disposal is believed to be contaminated with asbestos and Council is hoping to recycle or repurpose as much of the remaining uncontaminated material as possible.

**What effect does fire have on asbestos?**

During a fire, the amount of asbestos fibres released into the air is relatively low. After a fire, pieces of asbestos cement materials can become brittle and may release fibres if they are disturbed while cleaning up.

**I’m concerned that rain will limit the effectiveness of the glue stabiliser. What will happen?**

Yes, the stabiliser will be less effective, however, while the ruins are still wet there is little risk. Public Works contractors are committed to the reapplication of the glue to affected premises within 100m of occupied premises once the rain stops.

If dry conditions return and the glue is yet to be reapplied in a certain area, a precaution is to wear a P2 face mask if the breeze is coming towards your location. If inside keep the windows closed.

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If you have questions or concerns please contact the Recovery Support Service on (02) 6499 2345. *We’re here to help*