

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – ASBESTOS & LEAD

POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This Policy sets out Evolve Housing's approach to managing hazardous materials within Evolve managed Properties – in particular Asbestos (fibrous cement sheets and other products) and Lead (paint and other products). Evolve Housing aims to protect the health and safety of its Residents, staff, contractors, neighbours and others by minimising their risk of exposure to hazardous materials in our Properties.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fibre that has been used extensively in construction materials, due to its strength, flexibility and chemical resistant qualities. Many Australian homes built or repaired between 1940 and the early 1980s used asbestos cement materials (asbestos cement is also known as fibro or AC).

Lead is highly toxic and affects virtually every system of the body. While anyone can suffer from excessive exposure, children under the age of four, pregnant women and adolescents are most at risk, along with those people who are occupationally exposed to lead.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Evolve Housing Properties and to impacted Residents, staff, contractors and neighbours. Evolve Housing will ensure that reasonable and practical steps are taken to protect the health and safety of our Residents, staff and contractors by minimising their exposure to hazardous materials.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Evolve Housing is committed to maintaining Properties which are safe for our residents to live in, as well as meeting our responsibilities under Australian and State work, health and safety standards and related law.

3.1 Asbestos Hazards

Any disturbance to asbestos cement or other materials containing asbestos may be a potential health risk. Evolve Housing will investigate any asbestos related disturbances identified through its maintenance activities or reported by Residents. Evolve will take reasonable, timely and practical action to protect the health of Residents, staff, contractors and neighbours.

3.2 Lead Hazards

Lead hazard is defined as any condition that causes exposure to lead that could result in adverse human health effects. Hazards associated with lead can arise when lead contaminated paint begins to deteriorate, and produces dust deposits which may be ingested or inhaled.

Lead paint which is intact is not considered a hazard, although the paint should be maintained and its condition monitored to ensure that it does not deteriorate and become a hazard.

3.3 Properties with risk of a potentially serious asbestos or lead hazard

Where there is potential for a serious risk due to asbestos or lead contamination, Evolve will undertake the necessary remedial works to minimise the risk of the hazardous substance. Evolve will manage asbestos and lead hazards, including undertaking any remedial work, in accordance with the relevant federal and state legislation, standards and codes of practice. Evolve Housing will only allow tradespeople appropriately qualified to work with the relevant hazardous material to undertake work on our Properties.

An Evolve Housing representative will inform a Tenant prior to carrying out maintenance work on a Property if:

- Evolve considers that a Property may contain a hazardous material;

- the Property needs maintenance that may involve disturbing or damaging hazardous materials.

In this situation, the Tenant will be provided with information about the type of work to be carried out, how the Tenant should prepare and any precautions that the Tenant may need to take.

3.4 Tenant alterations to Properties

It is standard Evolve Housing policy that Tenants living in Properties owned or managed by Evolve must obtain permission from Evolve Housing prior to commencing any alterations. When deciding whether to give permission for alterations, Evolve Housing will consider the presence in the Property of asbestos cement, lead paint, or other hazardous building products.

Evolve will not give permission for a Tenant to commence any alterations, where there is a possibility of an asbestos or lead hazard. However if Evolve does give approval to a Tenant to make alterations to their Property, the Tenant should still be aware of potential hazards, and particularly avoid any activities that may result in asbestos or lead particles being released into the air, such as:

- Breaking asbestos cement;
- Dusting sweeping or vacuuming near broken asbestos cement;
- Using electric power tools;
- Drilling, sawing or sanding.

Tenants must also note that it is illegal to dispose of asbestos cement or other products containing hazardous materials in domestic rubbish bins or skips, or to use water blasting equipment on asbestos cement or other hazardous materials.

3.6 Responsibilities of Evolve Housing and Tenants

Tenants can expect Evolve Housing to:

- Maintain their home to a reasonable standard of safety as per the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*;
- Respond to information about the presence of damaged asbestos cement in Properties;
- Meet work, health and safety requirements when carrying out maintenance or demolition work that may disturb any hazardous materials.

Evolve Housing expects Tenants to:

- Care for their Property in a reasonable manner;
- Immediately report to Evolve any damaged asbestos cement or other hazardous material they find in their Property.

Evolve Housing

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In a situation where Evolve Housing needs to arrange to visit the Property to inspect a potential hazard, Evolve may ask the Tenant to:

- Be contactable during the timeframe for the visit;
- Allow access to the Property for Evolve Housing staff and contractors;
- Co-operate with any reasonable request that may help Evolve Housing to protect the health and safety of the Tenant and other household members, as well as the health and safety of Evolve staff and contractors involved in the inspection, and other residents of neighbouring properties.

4. DEFINITIONS

- **Asbestos** – a naturally occurring mineral fibre that has been used extensively in construction materials, due to its strength, flexibility and chemical resistant qualities. Many Australian homes built or repaired between 1940 and the early 1980s used asbestos cement materials (also known as ‘fibro’ or ‘AC’).
- **Lead** – is highly toxic and affects virtually every system of the body. While adolescents and adults can also suffer from excessive exposures (especially pregnant women and those who are occupationally exposed to lead), the people most at risk are children under the age of four.
- **Property** – the property or residential premises as described in the Residential Tenancy Agreement between the landlord and the Tenant.
- **Resident** – a person who resides on a permanent basis in a property which is owned or managed by Evolve Housing under a Residential Tenancy Agreement (includes a Tenant).
- **Tenant** – a person who signs the Residential Tenancy Agreement with Evolve Housing and who has certain rights and obligations under that Agreement.

5. RELATED RESOURCES

- *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)*
- *SafeWork NSW Code of Practice How To Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace September 2016*
- AS/NZS 4361.2:2017 Guide to hazardous paint management, Part 2: Lead paint in residential, public and commercial buildings
- SafeWork Australia and SafeWork NSW websites

This Policy is subject to change from time to time at the discretion of Evolve Housing. Any approvals required under this Policy will be granted in accordance with the Evolve Housing Limited Delegations of Authority Policy. Further information on this Policy and other topics, is available on the Evolve Housing website www.evolvehousing.com.au. If you have any specific questions regarding this Policy, please contact Evolve Housing on 1800 693 865 or email your enquiry to myevolve@evolvehousing.com.au.