

## Hazardous Materials Surveys

A Hazardous Material Survey is a survey of buildings or structures for materials likely to be hazardous to health, either to construction workers or occupants, or to the environment.

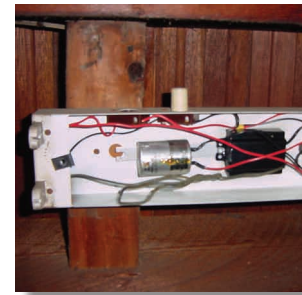
Typical materials surveyed include asbestos, lead and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), but may include other materials if these are likely to be an issue.



*Lead in paint*



*Asbestos roof*



*PCBs in old fluorescent light fitting*

## Why Carry Out A Hazardous Materials Survey?

The most common reasons are:

- Legislative requirements to protect workers or occupants
- Refurbishment or demolition
- Requirement of Development Consent
- Buying or selling
- General due diligence

## Legislative & Other Requirements

It is a legislative requirement for employers and controllers of premises to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees, contractors and visitors. Any foreseeable hazards that have the potential to cause harm must be **identified**. The risk associated with the identified hazards must be **assessed** by a competent person and eliminated or **controlled** and **reviewed** over time.

There are also civil law requirements to exercise due diligence.

Relevant National Occupational Health and Safety Health Commission (NOHSC) codes apply to asbestos. The **Code of Practice for the Management and Control of Asbestos in Workplaces** [NOHSC:2018(2005)] identifies the need and requirements for asbestos registers at places of work. It is practical and economical to assess other hazardous materials (eg lead and PCBs) when developing such an asbestos register to permit broader compliance with OHS legislation.

Where work has commenced without an asbestos/hazardous materials survey, relevant authorities may place a Prohibition Notice or similar on the site until the survey is conducted.

We have been called by relevant authorities as an expert witness in cases of prosecution involving organisations not having the necessary approvals and acting unprofessionally.

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