

ASBESTOS IN GEODETIC SURVEY MARK HATCH COVER SURROUNDS

A number of Landgate's early geodetic survey mark hatch cover surrounds were moulded using asbestos cement.

In its raw form, as free fibres, asbestos is known to be harmful to humans if inhaled. Undisturbed asbestos cement products however do not pose a health risk as the fibres are bound tightly within a cement matrix and may only be released through physical damage or weathering.

Geodetic survey mark hatch cover surrounds that may contain asbestos can be easily identified as they are generally grey and about 250mm in diameter. The 'hatch cover' lid is made of concrete and does not contain asbestos. Generally, the geodetic station summary identifies marks that have 'asbestos' surrounds (as they are colloquially described) and a special note will be added to the database as an addition warning for these marks: *The hatch cover surround on this mark may contain asbestos. Please handle appropriately or choose another mark.*

The presence of asbestos cement materials is no cause for alarm. If they are in good condition they do not present a health hazard, however it is important to handle these materials with care to avoid damage or abrasion which could generate particles that may become airborne.

Landgate recommends avoiding use of these particular marks in favour of alternative marks or implementing reasonable measures to prevent asbestos fibres being released.

Reasonable measures to prevent asbestos fibres entering the atmosphere and therefore subject to inhalation may include but not be limited to:

- Thoroughly wetting the material with water or a 1:10 polyvinyl acetate (PVA): water solution.
- Ensuring that the surround is not broken or abraded while accessing the mark.
- Use of a class P1 or P2 face mask or respirator appropriate for asbestos.
- If there is a risk of contamination of clothing - use disposable gloves and protective clothing, regular hand washing and laundry of clothes after completion of work, double bagging of protective equipment for disposal

For additional guidance please refer to the Code of Practice for the Management and Control of Asbestos in Workplaces [NOHSC:2018 (2005)] and the Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos 2nd Edition [NOHSC: 2002 (2005)]

If you encounter an asbestos cement hatch cover surround in a damaged, weathered or otherwise degraded state, please contact Landgate on 9273 7114 or by email: survey@landgate.wa.gov.au so that any necessary remedial action may be taken.

If you are concerned that you have been exposed to asbestos you can register your details on the National Asbestos Exposure Register at the Office of Asbestos Safety <http://asbestossafety.gov.au/national-asbestos-exposure-register>

For more information about asbestos, visit the Asbestos page on the Public Health website: http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/About-asbestos or the Asbestos safety and eradication agency <http://asbestossafety.gov.au/>