

**MEDIA RELEASE: Sunday 27 November 2016**

## **Asbestos Healthy House Checklists For Homeowners & Tradies Launched**

*Don't Play Renovation Roulette! - Get to kNOw Asbestos this NOVember!*

*Visit [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au) - It's not worth the risk!*

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In an Australian first, homeowners, renovators and Tradies now have step-by-step guidelines to help identify asbestos in domestic properties to prevent Australian's from being exposed to asbestos fibres.

Launched by the Asbestos Education Committee in partnership with the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute and supported by the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities, these vital new resources are available to download from [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au).

With 14 Australians dying of asbestos-related diseases (12 from malignant mesothelioma), and another 13 diagnosed with mesothelioma every week, one of the greatest health threats to homeowners and tradespeople is if they disturb asbestos-containing products that still remain in one third of Australian homes.

Serafina Salucci 47, who was diagnosed in 2007 after exposure to asbestos as a child during renovations welcomed the new 'Asbestos Awareness Healthy House Checklists' saying, "People just don't realise the hundreds of types of products that might contain asbestos nor the real and present danger of disturbing them during home renovations or maintenance."

"It's something so simple and yet before now there's been nothing like this available for homeowners and Tradies enabling them to conduct a very straight-forward visual checklist of homes to learn where these products might be found so they can manage asbestos safely," she said.

Without knowing the types of products to look for or the locations where they might be found in any home built or renovated prior to 1987, homeowners and tradespeople risk disturbing these products and releasing fibres that can be inhaled causing asbestos-related diseases including mesothelioma.

There is no cure for mesothelioma, a cancer that can develop between 20-50 years after inhaling asbestos fibres with the average survival time just 10-12 months following diagnosis.

To help prevent these life-threatening diseases, the National Asbestos Awareness Month campaign has developed multiple new resources including the 'Asbestos Awareness Healthy House Checklist – A Homeowners Guide To Identifying Asbestos-Containing Materials' and the 'Residential Checklist For Tradies – A Tradespersons Guide To Asbestos Containing Materials In Domestic Properties'.

"The Healthy House Checklist" is designed to empower homeowners and renovators with a better understanding of the possible locations of asbestos-containing materials in homes and the knowledge they need to ensure it is managed safely.

These Checklists include product images and lists each possible location where asbestos-containing materials might be found both inside and outside homes. By following simple step-by-step instructions, in less than an hour homeowners can have a better understanding of the types of products that might be in their home and if it's in need of maintenance, repair or removal.

Importantly, if planning any renovation or refurbishment to their property such as replacing floorcoverings, fencing or roofing, homeowners will know in advance if they need to engage a licenced asbestos assessor or removalist to ensure the work is done safely.

Asbestos Awareness Campaign Ambassador, Cherie Barber knows better than most the importance of undertaking a visual Healthy House Checklist prior to conducting home maintenance or planning renovations.

A professional renovator, founder and CEO of Renovating For Profit, Cherie Barber who tragically lost her Grandfather to mesothelioma, is one of Australia's leading advocates in the fight to stop more people becoming victims of asbestos.

In launching the newly developed resources at a Renovating for Profit workshop for 500 students, Cherie Barber said, "The health risks to anyone working on domestic properties when asbestos materials are disturbed is something every Australian needs to take seriously because asbestos doesn't discriminate.

"The Healthy House Checklist provides a practical guide for homeowners enabling them to conduct a simple step-by-step easy to follow visual inspection of their property.

"In doing so, homeowners will improve their understanding of the sorts of products to look for, the locations where asbestos might be found and how to manage these products safely. The Checklist also enables homeowners to maintain a record of possible asbestos locations should work or renovations be anticipated in the future and monitor asbestos-containing materials to ensure they remain sealed," she said.

"Until now, the only information available to homeowners wishing to conduct visual inspections of residential properties has often been cumbersome, complex, extensive documents that can be difficult to access.

"However, these newly developed resources for homeowners and Tradies presented in user friendly, easily accessible formats featuring product images and descriptions, will be invaluable tools in increasing awareness of the many products that still remain hidden dangers in 1 in every three homes," Ms Barber said.

While the risks to homeowners when doing maintenance or renovations is concerning, Tradies are at greater risk because they can come into contact with asbestos in their everyday work increasing the risk of exposure to asbestos fibres if they don't manage it safely.

Peter Dunphy, Founding Chair of the Asbestos Education Committee said, "Tradespersons are particularly at risk because all too often they've come from a culture where asbestos risks have been ignored."

"While tradies may have worked with asbestos in the past and ignored the warnings, they need to be aware that the more a person is exposed to fibres, the greater the risk of developing asbestos-related diseases so it's vital that they conduct visual inspections of properties to look for the potential dangers to ensure they're managed safely.

"The 'Residential Checklist For Tradies – A Tradespersons Guide To Asbestos Containing Materials In Domestic Properties' will increase Tradies' understanding of the various products they need to be wary of when working on residential properties and ensure they engage suitably qualified professionals to conduct asbestos-related work or remove asbestos-containing materials safely," Mr Dunphy said.

The Checklists provide instructions on how to conduct a visual inspection only and homeowners and tradies are encouraged to have an inspection conducted by a licenced asbestos assessor if they suspect asbestos-containing materials may be in need of repair or removal.

As part of National Asbestos Awareness Month, the Asbestos Education Committee also released new Fact Sheets featuring simple step-by-step procedures and safety precautions that homeowners and Tradies need to undertake when working with small amounts of asbestos in domestic properties.

Homeowners and Tradies should visit [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au) to download Checklists and Fact Sheets before undertaking work on homes because it's not worth the risk!

**-ENDS-**



**DON'T PLAY  
RENOVATION ROULETTE!**  
GET TO KNOW ASBESTOS THIS NOVEMBER



## FOR MORE INFORMATION & INTERVIEW REQUESTS PLEASE CONTACT

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**HIGH-RES IMAGES AND GRAPHICS** <https://app.box.com/v/AsbestosAwarenessImages>

### Interview Opportunities Include:

Serafina Salucci, victim of asbestos-related disease  
Cherie Barber, Asbestos Awareness Campaign Ambassador  
Peter Dunphy, Founding Chair of the Asbestos Education Committee  
Asbestos Awareness Ambassadors: Don Burke, Barry Du Bois, John Jarratt and Scott McGregor.

### JOURNALIST NOTES

The newly developed resources for homeowners and Tradies available at [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au) include:

#### STEP-BY-STEP RESOURCES FOR HOMEOWNERS

- Asbestos Awareness Healthy House Checklist – A Homeowners Guide To Identifying Asbestos-Containing Materials To Manage It Safely
- FACT SHEET 1: Working Safely With Asbestos Around The Home
- FACT SHEET 2: Safe Practices For Homeowners Repairing Or Removing Small Amounts Of Asbestos Materials
- FACT SHEET 3: Safe Practices For Rural & Regional Homeowners & Farmers Repairing Or Removing Small Amounts Of Asbestos Materials

#### STEP-BY-STEP RESOURCES FOR TRADIES WORKING ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

- Residential Checklist For Tradies – A Tradespersons Guide To Asbestos Containing Materials In Domestic Properties
- 22 individual Trade-Specific Checklists relevant to tradies most likely to work on domestic properties
- FACT SHEET T1: Tradies 20 Point Safety Check
- FACT SHEET T2: A Tradie's Guide To Safe Practices In Managing Asbestos In Residential Properties