

New safety rules – removal of coloured sand from workplaces

Working safely for asbestos related maintenance work

The ACT Government has made changes to the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* in relation to minor and routine maintenance and other minor asbestos related works.

Minor maintenance or other minor works

Work Health and Safety laws prohibit work involving asbestos (or asbestos containing materials, ACMs).

Minor maintenance or other minor works are allowed under work health and safety laws if done safely.

The changes – recalled coloured sand products

Under a new declaration, the following activities will be able to follow the safety rules set out for minor maintenance or other minor works with asbestos or ACM:

- removal and disposal of recalled coloured sand products
- cleaning of hard surfaces where small, confined contamination from the recalled coloured sand may have occurred
- cleaning of soft surfaces where small, confined contamination from the recalled coloured sand may have occurred.

Recalled coloured sand products manufactured in China have been the subject of recall notices published by the ACCC as they may contain asbestos.

Who can do minor maintenance or other minor works

All work with asbestos or asbestos containing materials must be carried out by a person who has appropriate training, skills and experience.

For asbestos removal works this means a licensed asbestos removalist.

Minor maintenance or other minor work may be done by a licensed removalist however it does not need to be.

It may also be done by a competent person such as someone who has completed the *working safely with asbestos training* mentioned in section 445A of the WHS Regulation.

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must:



consult and communicate about risks and controls



understand and assess the risks



ensure persons engaged to do **removal, cleaning or disposal** of recalled colour sand products have the right training, skills and experience



ensure all **other asbestos removal work** that is not minor or routine maintenance, or other minor works is done by a licensed asbestos removalist.

What other safety standards apply?

Other safety standards still apply when minor maintenance or minor work in relation to coloured sand is carried out. For example, under part 8.9 (asbestos related work) of the WHS Regulation.

This includes:

- air monitoring (section 482) if it is not certain that the risk of airborne asbestos from the work will be under the workplace exposure standard
- cleaning and disposal
- restrictions on the use of certain equipment (section 446).

A PCBU must also remember to keep an asbestos register and an asbestos management plan identifying where asbestos or ACMs have been found or assumed to be present and how they will be managed.

Not a workplace

If coloured sand products have been used in the home, these can be cleaned and removed safely by the homeowner/resident, following the advice for disposal.

A licensed assessor or removalist is not required but a homeowner may wish to seek professional advice if unsure.

The changes apply from 3 December 2025

Where are the changes found

The *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* (WHS Regulation) has been amended to allow the Minister to declare certain asbestos-related work activities to be “minor or routine maintenance, or other minor works” under section 419(3)(k) of the Regulation.

The Minister has **declared some disposal related activities** to remove recalled coloured sand products from workplaces to be minor or routine maintenance, or other minor works.

More information

- **Work Health and Safety (Minor or Routine Maintenance or Minor Works with asbestos or ACM) Declaration 2025 (No 1)**
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#)
- [Asbestos contamination confirmed in coloured sand product - WorkSafe ACT](#)
- [Working safely with asbestos containing materials - WorkSafe ACT](#)
- [Australian Competition and Consumer Commissioner - recalls](#)