

# Case Study: Integrated asbestos waste management program

## COUNCIL NAME

Ballina Shire Council

## WEB ADDRESS

[ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

## SIZE

485 square kilometres

## POPULATION

43, 457

## Overview

Ballina Shire Council have developed an integrated asbestos waste management program that educates staff and the community on asbestos identification and removal. The program includes a media campaign, free asbestos testing, household asbestos disposal kits, a secondary inspection bay at the waste management centre, and the use of a portable asbestos analyser as a screening tool. The outcomes of this program are a reduction of incidents involving asbestos at the Ballina Waste Management Centre.

## Background

Following the costly remediation and removal of asbestos contaminated crushed concrete and green waste at Ballina Waste Management Centre, Council undertook a review of their waste screening and acceptance procedures. Improved waste screening and acceptance was identified as essential to prevent asbestos containing material (ACM) contaminating other waste intended for reuse and reprocessing, and the elimination of asbestos exposure risks to staff and the community.

## Implementation

A project to develop an asbestos management framework that extended across all aspects of Council's waste management operations, particularly at the Ballina Waste Management Centre, was implemented. The project team liaised with key departments of Council including environment and health, trades, and waste management. Council also liaised with SafeWork NSW who inspected their site as part of a proactive asbestos intervention program. Outputs of the project are listed below:

### Community Asbestos Education and Support

- Development of a renovation factsheet to inform homeowners and renovators about asbestos before undertaking renovations
- Provision of free asbestos testing kits for residential properties within the Shire
- Subsidised household asbestos disposal kits including best practice instructions, PPE, and a tip fee for up to 10m<sup>2</sup> or 100 kg of ACM at the Lismore landfill.

### Waste Facility Site screening processes

- Installation of a highly visible warning sign at the waste centre
- Modifying the weighbridge preliminary inspection procedure
- Incorporation of a secondary inspection bay for suspect or high-risk loads
- Incorporation of the Prohibited Loads Register with the Asbestos Screening and Handling Procedure
- Use of a portable asbestos analyser as an inspection screening tool
- Establishment of physical barriers as a means of preventing loads being delivered directly to stockpiles.



- Establishment of designated quarantine areas for loads onsite awaiting further analysis.
- Staff training in the use of the asbestos analyser, Asbestos & Hazardous Waste Identification & Handling, and Remove non-friable asbestos (CPCCDE3014A)
- Improved monitoring and maintenance of rejected loads to deter vehicles with identified ACM that have been rejected from the waste management centre from illegally dumping this material.



Staff inspecting and testing for asbestos with portable asbestos analyser

## Outcomes

A positive outcome of this project was the increase in staff confidence and proactive behaviour when supported by a screening tool such as the portable asbestos analyser. The historic hostility and conflict from customers who had loads rejected due to asbestos has largely ceased. The asbestos analyser is seen as an independent tool enabling the focus and customer conversation to shift from whether the load contains asbestos to what are the available disposal options. The continued decrease in asbestos incidents on site and the reduction in the number of rejected loads demonstrate the success of this project.

## Key Learnings

During the field trial, the portable asbestos analyser proved a useful tool in determining the presence of asbestos in illegally dumped or orphan waste. Other departments of Council could benefit from the use of such technology.

## Contact

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This project was the 2018 winner of the Asbestos Management Award at the LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards