



AHI ROOFING

A FLETCHER BUILDING COMPANY

INDUSTRY ALERT

ASBESTOS IN EARLY PRESSED METAL STONE COATED ROOFING TILES

PRIOR TO EARLY 1980s

The purpose of this alert is to raise awareness within the roofing industry of the potential for exposure to asbestos when working with certain varieties of Pressed Metal Stone Coated Roofing Tiles manufactured prior to the early 1980s ("Pressed Metal Roof Tiles").

Background

Some versions of mastic or bitumen based Pressed Metal Roof Tiles produced prior to the early 1980s contain asbestos. Mastic or bitumen was the most common material used to adhere the stone chip to the pressed metal at that time. Some mastics and bitumen used in the manufacture of these tiles contained asbestos.

These tiles need to be approached with caution when carrying out maintenance or removal work.

Which Pressed Metal Roof Tiles may be affected?

Only mastic or bitumen based Pressed Metal Roof Tiles are affected.

As the mastic used in early Pressed Metal Roof Tiles were purchased as proprietary products, no product formulations are available to identify with any certainty when it was used. In addition, product information (such as manufacturing dates and batch data) was generally not included on tiles produced prior to the early 1980s, and is therefore not available to verify the presence or absence of asbestos in the tiles produced at that time.

This means that all mastic or bitumen based Pressed Metal Roof Tiles should be suspected of containing asbestos until proven otherwise. Particular profiles which are likely to be affected include:

- Decramastic
- Early Harveytiles

Other profiles may also be affected.

Pressed Metal Roof Tiles manufactured by other parties are believed to have been introduced and manufactured after the ban on asbestos was implemented, but the same care should be taken regardless for any Pressed Metal Roof Tiles which may contain a mastic or bitumen based product.

No acrylic or styrene acrylic manufactured tiles are affected. This means that none of the early products made by Gerard (i.e. the Tuffcoat profile) in the pre-1987 period are affected as these were only manufactured on styrene acrylic. Equally none of the "modern" Gerard profiles (e.g. Corona, Senator, Oberon, Milano, and Rockport) are affected.

How can asbestos containing Pressed Metal Roof Tiles be identified?

The presence or absence of asbestos can only be confirmed through appropriate sampling and testing by an accredited laboratory in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016 and the Approved Code of Practice: Management and Removal of Asbestos. A specialist should be engaged to undertake sampling and testing.

What should you do if you come across Pressed Metal Roof Tiles containing asbestos?

There are no risks associated with Pressed Metal Roof Tiles containing asbestos if they remain in good condition and are left undisturbed. They do not need to be removed solely because of the presence of asbestos. However, a health risk arises when asbestos fibres become airborne and can be breathed into the lungs. This may occur if the tiles are to be disturbed during maintenance or removal.

If you are undertaking work and identify or suspect Pressed Metal Roof Tiles containing asbestos are or may be present you must either:

- arrange a specialist to take samples and undertake testing to confirm the presence (or absence) of asbestos; or
- assume that asbestos is present.

If asbestos is assumed or confirmed to be present, any work must be carried out in accordance with the specific legal requirements governing the management of asbestos risks. The primary requirements are set out in the following documents:

- The Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016
- WorkSafe New Zealand Approved Code of Practice: Management and Removal of Asbestos
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

In the event of any questions or for more detailed information, you should seek your own legal or technical advice.

AHI Roofing Limited intends to work with the Roofing Association of New Zealand and to help installers and removalists deal with these issues in practice. This will happen as soon as possible in 2017. For now, we recommend care whenever Pressed Metal Roof Tiles containing asbestos are or may be present in your workplaces.