



Media release



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Asbestos fine for waste contractor

A skip bin operator has been convicted and fined \$21,000 in the Environment, Resource and Development Court today for receiving and storing asbestos without a licence.

Environment Protection Authority Manager Investigations, Stephen Barry, said when EPA officers inspected the Waste Away SA depot at Wingfield in January 2017, they found five skip bins containing up to two tonnes of asbestos and asbestos-contaminated material.

“Waste Away is a licensed waste transporter, but did not have a licence to receive or store asbestos at this site,” Mr Barry said.

“If a person is licensed by the EPA to transport asbestos waste, the waste can only be taken to a facility that is licensed to receive or dispose of asbestos. To store asbestos, a person must have the appropriate licence to operate a waste depot.”

Mr Barry said transporters also needed to ensure that the appropriate tracking forms were submitted, and that the asbestos was wrapped properly and clearly marked ‘Caution – asbestos. Do not inhale dust’ for the safety of anyone who handled the waste.

This prosecution follows a proactive education campaign in 2016 where the EPA inspected all licensed asbestos transporters and provided guidance on their licence conditions for the disposal and transport of asbestos.

Waste Away representatives said the bins containing the asbestos had been overlooked, but had been removed as soon as they were made aware of the issue.

The company has since moved to a new location, and its managing director has given assurances that its waste tracking system has been significantly improved.

Waste Away was also charged with discharging wash-down water from an industrial or commercial site into the stormwater system, and fined a further \$420.

“The company had received powdered quartz in one of its skip bins and used some of it to fill a pothole in the driveway,” Mr Barry said.

“In the process, powdered quartz was spilled, and the problem arose when a staff member hosed down the driveway, washing the dust into the stormwater system.

“Pollutants entering the stormwater system can damage both inland waterways and the marine environment.”

Waste Away was also required to pay \$800 in court costs and \$160 for the Victims of Crime Levy relating to the charges.