

# Media release



15 December 2021

## Notification of asbestos at Beverley site

Testing by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has found bonded asbestos in material from two stockpiles at Beverley sites operated by Belington Pty Ltd, trading as Old Red Brick Company.

The material is broken fragments of cement-fibre sheeting made from asbestos fibre. The asbestos fibres are tightly bound in the product and not normally released into the air unless they are disturbed, damaged or badly weathered.

The stockpiles contain a range of construction and demolition waste. Through court action, the EPA directed the company to apply and maintain a dust suppression sealant to the main stockpile on an unlicensed site.

The company had advised the EPA and the Environment, Resources and Development (ERD) Court that the stockpiles of bricks, concrete and masonry did not contain any asbestos-containing materials. The company reiterated this on 11 December following a testing program undertaken by its consultant, who was unable to identify any potential asbestos-containing material in the test pits and on the stockpile.

Old Red Brick Company is licensed by the EPA to receive the building waste at 167–169 and 171 William Street, Beverley. It has also been operating an adjacent, unlicensed site at Lot 2021 McLean Street, Beverley.

EPA Director Operations Andrew Pruszinski said that the EPA had been conducting monitoring and surveillance on the unlicensed site in response to community concerns about dust and the stockpiling of material.

An environment protection order to cease receiving, processing and stockpiling waste, and to remove the stockpile by 30 November 2021, was issued in September. The company is appealing this through the ERD Court.

As part of the court process, the EPA also requires the company to improve its dust management practices and community engagement plan.

The EPA sent an environmental consultant to inspect the stockpiled material on both sites on Monday 13 December 2021. The consultant collected a total of 19 samples of broken cement-fibre material.

Analysis at an accredited laboratory determined that 11 of the samples contained non-friable or bonded asbestos. All were made from Chrysotile fibres, commonly known as white asbestos.

“Old Red Brick Company was directed to apply sealant to one stockpile on the licensed site and one on the unlicensed site. This is expected to be completed today,” Mr Pruszinski said.

“The EPA has also engaged an environmental consultant to provide independent air monitoring, which began yesterday. The results will be made available daily on the EPA website.

“Residents and businesses in the area have been letterboxed today with this information, and we will be holding a community information session at Flinders Park Community Hall on Friday evening for

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people who want to speak to specialist staff from the EPA, SA Health, SafeWork SA and the City of Charles Sturt.”

Due to COVID-19 requirements, residents are required to register to attend at a convenient time.

SA Health has been notified that some stockpiles on the site contain asbestos fibre-cement sheet material.

“Asbestos exposures from dust escaping from the Old Red Brick Company site are unlikely to result in increased asbestos-related illness in the community,” said Deputy Chief Public Health Officer Dr Chris Lease.

“However, SA Health strongly supports the implementation of strict dust control measures to prevent the escape of dust into the community as we know that exposure to high levels of dust can aggravate conditions such as asthma, emphysema, bronchitis and other respiratory diseases.”

Community information can be found on the EPA [website](#).