

## ASBESTOS REMOVAL & ASSESSMENT SERVICES

Asbestos has been mined in South Africa since 1930 and was a popular material used in over 3000 different products in the building and engineering industries over more than a century. Asbestos exposure resulted in many deaths as a result of diseases such as asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. Although the use of asbestos in new work has been banned in South Africa since 2008, there are many asbestos containing materials (ACMs) that are still in use today.

Employees may unknowingly be exposed to asbestos during maintenance, decorating, renovating or even demolishing of redundant plant equipment and buildings. Injudicious disturbance of asbestos may contaminate workplaces, which may present a serious health risk to employees, occupants or even members of the public.



### WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is the generic name for a number of naturally occurring silicate mineral fibres. Asbestos is a versatile product. Due to its ability to withstand heat, erosion and decay, and for its fire and water resistant properties, asbestos was widely used in building materials. Despite the use of all forms of asbestos being banned nationally, building materials containing asbestos are still prevalent in our community today. The most commonly found building materials that contain asbestos are asbestos cement products.

### WHERE CAN ASBESTOS BE FOUND?

Because the level of exposure that may cause health problems is unknown, any exposure to asbestos should be avoided. It is estimated that at least one in every three buildings constructed between the 1940's and 1990's contains asbestos products.

Asbestos may be found either firmly or loosely bound in a number of products once used in the South African construction industry, including:

