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### NATIONAL SILICOSIS PREVENTION STRATEGY

Silicosis has been much in the news lately and is being described as 'the new asbestos'. The current trend for manufactured stone in kitchen countertops is one of the reasons the disease has become so prevalent.

Crystalline silica is a natural mineral found in construction materials such as concrete, tiles and engineered stone. It is particularly dangerous for workers because it can contain high levels of silica.

When ground, cut, drilled or sanded, inhaling the dust can cause deadly lung and respiratory diseases such as silicosis. Silicosis is treatable but not curable – it is a life limiting disease, often affecting younger tradies who work in the construction industry.



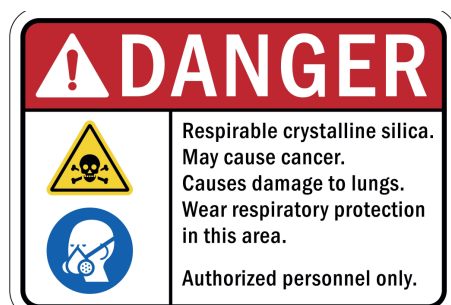
#### National Dust Diseases Task Force

The National Dust Diseases Task Force reported in July 2021 that almost a quarter of the workers working with engineered stone since before 2018 were suffering from silicosis. It found that existing WHS laws had failed to protect workers, citing inadequate control of dust exposure, ineffective health monitoring and insufficient enforcement of existing laws by WHS regulators. A ban on silica products is recommended by July 2024 if the product could not be found to be used safely. The CMFEU is calling for an immediate ban on engineered stone.

#### National Silicosis Prevention Strategy (NSPS) & National Action Plan (NAP)

This will be the first national action plan designed to prevent and ultimately eliminate silicosis as an occupational disease in Australia. Both the NSPS and the NAP outline a coordinated national approach to silicosis prevention that involves government, National Employers' and Workers' organisations.

Workplace health and safety ministers and key industry groups from across the country met in February to discuss whether a tougher approach is needed. Health Minister Mark Butler said an import ban was "obviously an option that will be considered".



#### SafeWork SA Safety flyer

To assist the construction industry in minimising the risk of occupational exposure, SafeWork SA is supporting the SA Construction Safety Alliance respirable crystalline silica initiative. SACSAs has developed a Safety essential flyer to help minimise risk – please read and share if you know anyone working in the industry. <https://tinyurl.com/3yhkikdp>

#### Executive Committee:

##### President / Treasurer

Peter Baxter

##### Vice President

Maxine Williams

##### Office Manager

Lesley Shears

##### Committee members

Gloria Hinks

Doreen Ryan

Brendan Shears

##### Fleurieu representative

Catherine Wegener

##### Whyalla Support Group

John Arthur

## Asbestos Dangers - Flood recovery in the Riverland

Communities in the Riverland have struggled through a slow-moving disaster, watching the progress of the floods along the river and waiting to see whether their properties would be affected. Many properties were inundated – shacks, businesses, caravan parks, homes and crops were lost. People had to find somewhere else to live in the short term.

Now the water has receded, and the clean-up can start. Many have to make hard decisions – how bad is the damage? Is the property salvageable? Can it be rebuilt/repared? Is it safe to rebuild in the same spot? An important part of decision making will be the insurance assessor's report so people can find out what their financial situation is. Once the decision is made to stay or go, the next thing will be trying to get hold of tradies to do the work.

### River Murray residents, shack owners and emergency response crews are being warned of the dangers of handling asbestos when flood waters subside.

SafeWork SA advises that undamaged asbestos-containing material that has dried since the flood or storm can be cleaned with soapy water and a cloth or sponge. It is also safe to lightly scrub the material with a soft brush or broom and spray it gently with a garden hose. It is [important to not use a high-pressure hose](#) as this may break the surface and release asbestos fibres into the air, which are then breathed in.

People cleaning-up after the flood or undertaking any repairs, renovation or demolition work are being urged to become familiar with the type of products that may contain asbestos and where to find them. The South Australian Government asbestos website has a page to help [identify asbestos in the home](#).

Asbestos materials that are beyond cleaning, will require removal by a [licensed asbestos removalist](#) to reduce the risk of exposure during removal. A licensed asbestos removalist will have the relevant training and equipment to safely remove the asbestos from your home.

By law, asbestos waste must be taken to a licensed transfer stations or waste depots. It is recommended that you contact your local transfer station or waste depot for advice. Go to the EPAs [Wastes containing asbestos – removal, transport and disposal](#) for a list of licensed waste facilities.



## IT IS ILLEGAL TO DISPOSE OF ASBESTOS IN THE NORMAL RUBBISH COLLECTION AND A CRIME TO DUMP IT IN THE STREET OR ON VACANT LAND.

### Asbestos and Insurance

Disaster events such as house fire, bushfire, floods, storms and cyclones occur regularly in Australia.

Cleaning up after a disaster event is significantly more dangerous and more expensive for properties where asbestos is present, and you may find that your insurance doesn't provide the cover you need.

You can lower your risk of accidental damage and uninsured costs if you check and plan for the presence of asbestos before disaster strikes and, if possible, have it safely removed.

### Is your insurance policy asbestos ready?

Insurance policies may have exclusions for asbestos, or the level of coverage under a policy may not be enough to cover your actual expenses if asbestos materials are accidentally damaged or disturbed.

There is also a requirement for policy holders to take all reasonable precautions to manage any risk to their property and to declare any potential risks – such as the presence of asbestos – to the insurer when taking out an insurance policy. While you still have asbestos in your property, speak to your insurer and make sure you understand what asbestos-related incidents are covered under your insurance policies.

# Fleurieu Region Memorial Day

**DATE: 7 June 2023**  
**VENUE: Mount Compass Hotel**



## Fleurieu Region Support Group

Catherine Wegener from the Fleurieu region support group regularly appears on 90.1 Happy FM radio station based at Victor Central Shopping Centre in the heart of Victor Harbor. Catherine discusses the dangers of the removal of asbestos from homes and advises listeners on the help and support that is available for those who have a family member, friend or neighbour who has an asbestos related illness.

June Taylor, presenter of the "Morning Magazine Program" said that it is critical that we get this vital information out to the masses in this region. "It's important as a community-based radio station that we provide the correct information on procedures to be undertaken when removing asbestos from homes built prior to the 1980's" she said. "Catherine Wegener is well versed in this matter, and she is always willing to provide information to any listener who is contemplating renovations on an older style home or caravan in the region. Her personal support to those who are suffering from an asbestos related illness is unsurpassed".



Catherine Wegener & June Taylor

If you want more information on the removal of asbestos or you want emotional support for a loved one who has the disease visit the AVA website [avasa.asn.au](http://avasa.asn.au) or telephone **0455 120 588**

**The Fleurieu Region Memorial Day will be held on 7 June 2023** at Mount Compass. Please put this date in your diary if you are in the Southern region.

## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ASBESTOS VICTIMS ASSOCIATION (SA) INC

Members are advised that Asbestos Victims Association (SA) Inc (AVA) will hold an Annual General Meeting on 24 May 2023.

**Date & time:** Wednesday 24 May 2023 at 10 am

**Location:** AVA office, level 9, 60 Waymouth Street Adelaide.

At the meeting, members will have the opportunity to:

- \* find out about AVA's operations and finances and ask questions
- \* speak about any items on the agenda
- \* vote on any resolutions proposed.

An agenda and minutes will be available at the meeting.



# Asbestos Victims Memorial Day

**DATE: 24 November 2023**  
**VENUE: Pitman Park SALISBURY**



## 2023 DIARY DATES

- 9 & 10/3 Cancer Survivorship conference  
22-24/3 Visit to Whyalla and Port Augusta  
27/3 AVA presentation, SES Prospect 7 pm  
31/3 – 2/4 Master Builders SA Home Show – Adelaide Showgrounds  
24/4 AVA presentation, Rotary Club of Salisbury at The Old Spot  
28/4 International Workers Memorial Day – Voice of Industrial Death (VOID)  
Service at Pilgrim Church (to be confirmed)  
1/5 May Day rally at Port Adelaide – SA Unions  
24/5 AVA AGM—level 9, 60 Waymouth Street Adelaide  
7/6 Fleurieu Region Memorial—Mount Compass Hotel  
22/6 Salisbury Health Expo Thursday 22/6/2023.



**SOCIAL MORNINGS AT 60 WAYMOUTH STREET**  
**2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH:**  
10 am—11.30 am

**No meeting in April**      10 May  
14 June      12 July 9 August      13 September  
11 October      8 November  
**Christmas lunch 13 December 2023**

## AVA THANKS THE FOLLOWING MAJOR SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

**TURNER FREEMAN      ADCO PRINT      INTEGRINET DESIGN**  
**SHOP DISTRIBUTIVE & ALLIED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (SDA)**  
**SAFework SA      CITY OF SALISBURY COUNCIL**

**Australian Workers & Manufacturing Union (AMWU)**  
**Communications, Electrical & Plumbing Union (CEPU)**  
**Construction, Forestry, Mining, & Energy Union (CFMEU)**  
**Maritime Union of Australia      United Workers Union**  
**Australian Workers Union      Public Service Association of SA**  
**Return to Work SA**

## PATRONS

**The Hon. Peter Malinauskas, Premier of SA**  
**Frances Bedford, Democracy Advocate**

**Peter Bauer, State Secretary AMWU**  
**Tony Zappia MP**