

Queensland Asbestos Disposal Pilot

Expression of Interest

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What is the Queensland Asbestos Disposal Pilot?

The Queensland Government is delivering a coordinated approach to the regulation and management of asbestos through the *Statewide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2014-2019* (the Strategic Plan).

The Strategic Plan sets out initiatives which fall under three priority areas:

- minimising the risk of exposure to asbestos
- seamless and integrated government service delivery
- community education and awareness about asbestos.

The Interagency Asbestos Group, which has representatives from relevant state government agencies and the Local Government Association of Queensland, provides oversight of the Strategic Plan and works together to achieve a systematic and consistent response to managing asbestos in Queensland.

The Queensland Asbestos Disposal Pilot is an initiative of the Interagency Asbestos Group and aims to improve the ways homeowners can dispose of small quantities of bonded asbestos found in their homes or properties (e.g. asbestos sheets from a bathroom/kitchen renovation or scrap pieces of asbestos found in yard). The pilot will not apply to the disposal of commercial quantities of asbestos or to the disposal of asbestos which has been removed by commercial asbestos removal services.

The Government is seeking councils to participate in the pilot and trial a number of options to determine effective methods of encouraging residents to dispose of small amounts of bonded asbestos waste.

Why is the pilot important and what does it seek to achieve?

Disposal at landfill facilities can be difficult and restrictive as there are limited landfill sites that accept asbestos waste. Councils also set their own fees for disposing of asbestos which vary considerably across local government areas.

In 2013, the Queensland Ombudsman released *The asbestos report: an investigation into the regulation of asbestos in Queensland*. The Ombudsman's report highlighted issues regarding the cost for homeowners to dispose of asbestos and the lack of facilities which accept asbestos from homeowners. The Ombudsman recommended that work be undertaken to ensure there are adequate facilities in each local government area to enable homeowners to dispose of asbestos waste safely and lawfully.

Councils across Queensland have also made a number of representations identifying the need to address issues regarding disposal of small quantities of asbestos in domestic settings.

The pilot will trial a number of options to establish asbestos disposal methods which encourage homeowners to dispose of small quantities of asbestos waste found in their homes or properties. The options are intended to make it easier and safer for homeowners to dispose of asbestos waste.

When is the pilot commencing and how long will it run for?

The pilot is scheduled to commence in early 2017 and will run for a 12 month period.

There is no obligation for participating councils to continue to implement the pilot options after this time. It will be up to individual councils to determine whether to continue implementing or adopt successful pilot options after the pilot has ended.

What will the pilot be trialling?

The pilot will trial different options aimed at providing effective and safe ways for homeowners to dispose of asbestos waste found in their homes or properties. Four suggested pilot options are outlined below. Councils may also wish to nominate alternative option/s as part of their expression of interest or adapt the suggested options to meet the needs of their council.

Information provided as part of the expression of interest process will be used as a starting point only. Before commencement of the pilot, the Government will work with selected councils to tailor the pilot

options to meet the needs of the council and ensure they can be effectively and safely implemented in each council area. The final details and parameters of the pilot will be negotiated with selected councils to provide flexibility in the delivery of the options in council areas.

Option 1: holding a designated day for free asbestos disposal at a local landfill

Under this option councils can have a designated asbestos ‘drop off day’ at existing council waste facilities, to allow residents to dispose of bagged household bonded asbestos free of charge. This does not include disposal of commercial quantities of asbestos or disposal of asbestos which has been removed by commercial asbestos removal services. Residents will need to ensure asbestos has been double bagged and taped so the load is completely contained.

Option 2: providing a permanent skip bin for asbestos disposal at a local landfill

Councils can provide a permanent skip bin designated for bagged bonded asbestos disposal at the local landfill, aimed at improving the efficiency of the disposal process for residents and councils. Under this option, residents will still be required to pay the relevant disposal fees set by their council. Residents will also need to ensure asbestos has been double bagged and taped so the load is completely contained.

Option 3: providing asbestos disposal kits to residents

This option will involve the provision of asbestos disposal kits to residents to encourage them to safely handle and dispose of bonded asbestos found or removed from their homes. Kits will include masks, coveralls, shoes, gloves, heavy duty duct tape, warning labels and signs, bag, drop sheet and cable ties. Kits will need to be correctly disposed of after their use by residents.

Option 4: reducing asbestos disposal fees

By reducing the council’s fees for homeowners disposing of asbestos waste at the local landfill facility, councils will encourage more homeowners to safely dispose of asbestos waste.

Alternative options

Consideration will be given to other proposals put forward by councils where it is demonstrated they can be successfully and safely implemented by the council and will have a beneficial impact on residents in the area. Councils may also wish to adapt options 1 to 4 to meet their own needs.

Who can participate?

To be eligible to participate in the asbestos disposal pilot, councils must meet these minimum criteria:

1. be a Queensland council
2. agree to implement nominated pilot options over the 12 month pilot period and agree to participate in an ongoing evaluation
3. have proper governance practices in place throughout the pilot period
4. hold appropriate public liability insurance arrangements.

Selected councils will be asked to enter into agreements with the state government setting out the terms and conditions of participation. This may include media and promotional commitments, ensuring governance practices and insurance arrangements are in place, and participation in an evaluation of the pilot.

How will expressions of interest be assessed?

Eligible expressions of interest will be assessed by an independent panel of government representatives (the selection panel).

The selection panel will assess expressions of interest against the following criteria:

- council’s ability to demonstrate the nominated option/s can be safely and effectively implemented in their local council area
- council’s willingness to participate in an ongoing evaluation of the pilot

- council’s demonstrated need for the project, based on how it will make a difference to residents in the council area
- ensuring a balance of councils are represented in the pilot, including regional and metropolitan councils and councils of varying sizes
- council has sound project planning and methodology.

Councils are encouraged to provide detailed information on their expression of interest form that demonstrates their ability to implement their nominated option/s. Information provided should include any issues or barriers (including any issues regarding current environmental approvals or conditions) that may need to be addressed before the nominated option/s can be implemented.

The following table provides some examples of information to include in the expression of interest form for each of the suggested options:

| Option | Information to include in expression of interest form |
|--|--|
| Option 1 – holding a designated day for free asbestos disposal at a local landfill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council currently holds hazardous waste drop off days (or similar) at particular times of the year which could be expanded to include asbestos • council actively promotes such drop off days to residents and they have proven to be successful • council has sufficient staff to supervise a designated drop off day • council has existing approvals and licences to accept asbestos waste from homeowners or some minor amendments are required to enable asbestos disposal |
| Option 2 – providing permanent bin for asbestos waste disposal at a local landfill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local landfills have designated areas to accommodate permanent bins or there is capacity to make designated area available • council has adequately trained staff to supervise a designated area and there is willingness upon the council to promote safe disposal of asbestos to residents • council has existing approvals and licences to accept asbestos waste from homeowners or some minor amendments are required to enable asbestos disposal |
| Option 3 – providing asbestos disposal kits to residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how asbestos disposal kits might be beneficial to residents in your council area • how asbestos disposal kits could be distributed to residents in council area (e.g. at landfill facilities, public location or council office) and how kits would be disposed of after their use by residents |
| Option 4 – reducing asbestos disposal fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how a reduction in fees may encourage residents in your council area to dispose of small quantities of asbestos waste |

The selection of councils to participate in the pilot is at the discretion of the selection panel and there will be no review or appeal mechanism following the expression of interest process. Councils that are not successful with their expression of interest will be advised in writing.

Following the selection process, the Government will work with selected councils to tailor the option/s and ensure they can be safely and effectively implemented before commencement of the pilot period.

What support and resources will be provided to councils?

The Government commits to ensuring there is sufficient funding and resources available to selected councils to implement the pilot options. The specific support provided to each selected council will be established and agreed before the commencement of the pilot.

The nature of this support will depend on the needs of councils and vary on a case-by-case basis according to the options implemented in each council area. Support will include provision of resources, financial reimbursement of costs and access to technical advice and assistance. Examples of support include development of communications and promotional material, provision of asbestos safety disposal kits and reimbursement for the costs of reducing disposal fees.

In addition, the Interagency Asbestos Group will provide assistance to councils should any amendments to licensing conditions or approvals be required to implement any of the pilot options (e.g. environmental approvals or authorities).

How will the pilot be evaluated?

It is intended to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the pilot to assess the impact and success of the implemented pilot options. Evaluation measurements may include the amount of asbestos being disposed of by homeowners and the participation rate within the council area. However, the nature of the evaluation will depend on the option/s implemented in each council area.

Each council selected to participate in the pilot must agree to participate in the evaluation, which will require ongoing participation throughout the pilot period. To assist with the evaluation, councils will be asked to record specific information during the pilot.

How do you submit an expression of interest and what is the closing date?

An expression of interest form is provided at Appendix A. Forms are also available on the Queensland Government's asbestos website at asbestos.qld.gov.au.

The expression of interest form and any supporting documents should be sent by email to WHSPolicy@justice.qld.gov.au. Any queries regarding the pilot or expression of interest process can also be sent to this email address.

The closing date for expressions of interest is Friday 11 November 2016.

It is acknowledged that some councils may need to hold council meetings or seek formal approval before being able to commit to participating in the pilot. Applications will therefore be treated as initial interest and formal agreement to participate in the pilot will be entered into with councils after the closing date. Councils are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible in the expression of interest form to assist with the assessment process.

Appendix A – Expression of interest form

1. Council details

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Name of council | |
| Postal address | |
| Phone number | |
| Email | |
| Nominated primary contact | Name: Position: Daytime phone: Mobile phone: Email: |

2. What are the current arrangements for asbestos disposal in your council?

Do you accept asbestos waste from homeowners at landfill or transfer stations in your council area?

- Yes
- No

Are the landfill/transfer stations in your council area privately owned or managed by private operators?

If so, what are the council disposal fees for homeowners wishing to dispose of asbestos waste?

Do you have any specific restrictions on the disposal of asbestos waste in your council area?

What licences/approvals, if any, does your council hold for the storage or disposal of asbestos waste (and do any of these require amendment to implement the nominated pilot options)?

What advice/information does your council provide homeowners about disposal of asbestos waste?

3. Which asbestos disposal pilot options would you like to participate in?

Please indicate which pilot option/s your council is nominating to participate in. Councils can nominate more than one option.

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option 1 – holding a designated day for free asbestos disposal at a local landfill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option 2 – providing a permanent skip bin for asbestos disposal at a local landfill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option 3 – providing asbestos disposal kits to residents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option 4 – reducing asbestos disposal fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative option – please specify your alternative option/s below |

Please provide information on your nominated option/s in the blank section below (or by attachments), demonstrating the likely benefit of each of the option/s for your council area and the ability of your council to implement each of the nominated option/s. This should include any issues or barriers that may need to be addressed before the option/s can be implemented and if possible, any indication of potential costs to implement the options in the council area.

Please note: Information provided in this section is provided as a starting point only. Following the expression of interest process, the Government will work with selected councils to establish the details and parameters for implementing the pilot in each council area. This will provide selected councils with flexibility in determining the final pilot option to be delivered in their council area.

4. Certification

I certify that:

- I am authorised to submit this expression of interest on behalf of the council.
- The details in the expression of interest, including any supporting documents, are true and correct.
- I understand the submission of an expression of interest does not guarantee participation in the Queensland Asbestos Disposal Pilot.
- If selected to participate in the Queensland Asbestos Disposal Pilot, I agree for the council to participate in an evaluation of the pilot.
- I acknowledge that Workplace Health and Safety Queensland will work with each selected council before commencement of the pilot to ensure that reasonable measures are implemented to control risks of airborne asbestos fibres during storage, transport and disposal of asbestos waste.
- All information provided in the expression of interest will be treated as confidential and will be managed in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Given name

Surname

Phone

Mobile

Position

Signature

Date