

Free Asbestos Collection Trial – Holroyd City Council

COUNCIL NAME

Holroyd City Council

WEB ADDRESS

www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au

SIZE

40 square kilometres

POPULATION

102,188

Overview

In 2013, Holroyd City Council conducted a free asbestos collection trial to offer residents (not builders or other contractors) a lawful and convenient disposal solution for the small quantities of bonded (non-friable) asbestos (less than 10 m²) that may have been generated as a result of minor renovations and/or repairs to residential properties. The provision of this service was to minimise the likelihood that the asbestos would be discarded illegally in Council garbage bins or disposed of illegally in public places. This trial identified a genuine need by the community for disposal solutions. After the trial, additional collection days were offered and quickly filled and there was demand for further collection days. In 2014, council offered information sessions, asbestos removal kits and continued to develop a website about asbestos in the home.



Figure 1. Asbestos cement sheet collected during the free asbestos collection trial.

Background

Holroyd City Council is situated in the “fibro belt” of Sydney, a group of Western Sydney suburbs built in the 1950s and 1960s with many streets of houses built with fibro cement that was at the time reinforced with asbestos. This knowledge, coupled with the current sense of a ‘renovation boom’ led Council to determine that the removal and disposal of asbestos from residential properties is a major issue within the Holroyd community.

Implementation

The first free asbestos collection trials were conducted over two days (28th and 29th June 2013). The following steps were followed in order to coordinate the trial efficiently:

- Council staff members liaised with representatives from the Asbestos Diseases Foundation of Australia, Workcover NSW and Local Government NSW.
- Council sought quotations from licensed contractors who could carry out the collection and subsequent disposal works.
- Discussions were held with the selected contractors and it was decided that 12 pickups allocated on one day would be achievable (this was later increased to approximately 18-20).
- Minimal advertising was done and limited to local newspapers and Council’s Facebook page.

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- Within two days of advertisement, sufficient bookings were made for two days of collection.
 - Addresses were compiled into two separate run sheets (one for each day) and were allocated according to region so as to maximise efficiency and minimise truck movements on the day.
 - The trial resulted in the collection of 1.2 tonnes of asbestos containing material from 25 households.
 - In the week following the trial, all participating households were sent an evaluation sheet, providing Council with valuable feedback to guide the future direction of the initiative.
 - Since the trial, Council has offered information nights to the community and asbestos removal kits to assist with the safe removal of less than 10m² of non-friable asbestos.

Outcomes

Council's free asbestos collection trial proved to be a very popular program within the Holroyd community. Overall feedback received from the participating households was very positive and has been useful when considering how to expand the program further. Since the initial trial, another seven collection days have been conducted, resulting in the collection of 8.92 tonnes of asbestos. A waiting list exists to meet demand for this service.

Key Learnings

Key lessons for other councils:

- There is significant demand for this initiative in Holroyd and there may also be demand in other Local Government Areas.
- Participating residents identified cost and lack of knowledge about disposal options as the main barriers that had prevented them disposing of the asbestos containing material, resulting in them leaving the material on their properties.
- The feedback received for the initiative indicated an overall willingness to pay a small amount (between \$50 - \$75) for such a service.

Contact

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