



11 APR 2013

Office of Hon Amy Adams

Member of Parliament for Selwyn

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Communications and Information Technology

Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery

ENV 10000

Deidre vanGerven
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Dear Deidre vanGerven

Thank you for your email of 17 February 2013 regarding products containing asbestos.

I appreciate that information on the management of asbestos is found on a number of government web pages. The use of asbestos products in buildings is controlled under the Building Act 2004 and the New Zealand Building Code (the Building Code). Information on how it is controlled under the Building Code can be found in the Building Code Handbook under Clause F2- Hazardous Building Materials (see www.dbh.govt.nz/compliance-documents#handbooks). Also of relevance are the New Zealand Guidelines for the Management and Removal of Asbestos (revised in 2011, see www.osh.govt.nz/publications/booklets/asbestos-management-removal/index.asp).

In relation to your concerns about labelling of asbestos products, the Health and Safety in Employment (Asbestos) Regulations 1998 require manufacturers and suppliers of products containing asbestos to take all practicable steps to ensure products containing asbestos are clearly labelled. This ensures that people who encounter these products are aware that they contain asbestos, and enables them to take the appropriate risk management actions. If you have further questions around the Building Code, or the Health and Safety Regulations, I suggest you contact the Building and Housing branch of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment at info@dbh.govt.nz, or the Labour branch at info@dol.govt.nz.

As you note, a number of government departments are responsible for the management of asbestos. This reflects New Zealand's approach to managing the risks presented by a number of hazardous substances, including asbestos. This integrated approach ensures that risks to people from hazardous substances are appropriately managed. As you requested, I am also providing this response to Hon Simon Bridges, the Minister of Labour, and Hon Maurice Williamson, the Minister of Building and Construction, for their information.

Yours sincerely

Hon Amy Adams
Minister for the Environment

cc Hon Simon Bridges, Minister of Labour
Hon Maurice Williamson, Minister of Building and Construction