



Dominic Perrottet MP

Minister for Finance and Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES FURTHER ASSISTANCE FOR LOOSE-FILL ASBESTOS HOMES

The NSW Government has today announced a further assistance package for NSW residents with loose-fill asbestos in their homes. Minister for Finance and Services, Dominic Perrottet said the Government was taking action to offer both immediate and long-term measures.

“Ensuring the health and safety of residents is the NSW Government’s top priority,” Mr Perrottet said. “This is why we are taking comprehensive action, based on our health advice, to ensure affected owners and residents have the support they need.”

“This includes both a ‘Make Safe’ Assistance Package for affected properties and the establishment of a Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Taskforce.”

Mr Perrottet said the ‘Make Safe’ Assistance Package, available immediately, supplements already available measures with financial assistance to help residents safely manage loose fill asbestos.

“This package provides financial support for sealing of cavities, environmental cleaning of habitable areas, hazard labelling and regular inspections. Support will also be provided for counselling services, assistance towards the replacement of furnishings and where required emergency accommodation.”

Mr Perrottet said the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Taskforce would develop a comprehensive action plan to advise the government on the most appropriate enduring solution to the loose-fill asbestos issue in NSW, which will look at options that could include government purchase, demolition and owner rebuild options.

“We want to conduct an evidence-based, consultative, cost effective and measured approach to long term remediation that takes into account the needs of the community,” the Minister said.

“That’s why we’ve created a multi-agency task force that will be chaired by retired NSW Police Deputy Commissioner Dave Owens and will report to Government by May 2015.”

“Today’s announcement by the NSW Government of a comprehensive response to the issue of loose fill asbestos in NSW homes reflects our commitment to protecting the health and safety of NSW residents.”

The Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Taskforce includes representatives of the Department of Planning and Environment, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Environment Protection Authority, Local Government NSW, Ministry of Health, NSW Treasury, Office of Local Government, and WorkCover NSW.

The Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) independent investigation into loose-fill asbestos in New South Wales to identify the full extent of affected homes across the State will report to the Taskforce by 30 April 2015.

“I’d like to pay tribute to the efforts of the Member for Monaro John Barilaro who has been a tireless advocate for the needs of his electorate,” Mr Perrottet said. “He has been instrumental in ensuring his constituents get the help they need.”

The Member for Monaro John Barilaro said that the plan demonstrates the government’s commitment to keeping local residents safe.

“This comprehensive package will help ensure current practices for managing loose-fill asbestos reduces the risk of exposure through better coordination and improve public awareness for the community,” he said.

“Unfortunately families have been caught in the middle, but our resolute focus is about ensuring the safety of all residents to improve long term health and safety outcomes.”

“This package is a call to government, industry and the wider community to take action and responsibly manage loose-fill asbestos and we now have a mechanism and the resources to do so.”

A new website and hotline has been set up for the community to obtain further information.

More details can be found online at www.nsw.gov.au/loosefillasbestos or by calling Service NSW on 13 77 88.