

Chris Morris
Reporter
Otago Daily Times

Dear Chris,

Official information request for information about council buildings containing asbestos.

I refer to your official information request dated May 16 for information about asbestos.

Further to this we had a phone discussion on June 7 in which you asked me to concentrate on questions 2 (a) to 2 (f) and requested as much information as I could gather to be sent to you on Monday, June 13, to meet your deadline.

I also note that information regarding shipments of asbestos contaminated material to the Green Island landfill, from Christchurch, has already been emailed to you on June 7. And also that you have recently received answers to questions about asbestos cement water pipes from staff in the water and waste department.

As at Monday, June 13, I have received the following information related to the questions you asked me to prioritise:

Red comments can be attributed to Tom Osborn, Asset and Commercial Manager.

Blue comments can be attributed to Kevin Taylor, Property Manager.

The chart attached to this letter below can be attributed to Tom Dyer, Asset and Commercial Manager, Parks and Recreation.

(a) The names and addresses of each council-owned building or property known to have asbestos present.

The DCC is in the process of constructing a management plan for asbestos, this includes compiling a register on all property/building owning or controlling departments.

Here are the current identified buildings which have had issues identified:

Department	Building	Address	Type of Asbestos Present	Risk	Description of Remediation
Parks and Recreation	Tahuna Park Pavilion	37 Victoria Road, St Kilda	Large storage building clad in corrugated asbestos sheets. Chrysolite (white asbestos) Amosite (brown	Fibre release risk medium-low Asbestos fibres found in various locations throughout the interior and on structures	Site Isolated March 2016. Perimeter fenced. Tendering underway to remediate – going to market late June. Cost incurred to date:: Sample testing \$3,200, operational containers relocated away

			asbestos)	immediately adjacent to the building.	from site cost: \$5,249.00. Estimated Cost of remaining work: \$200,000 to \$400,000
	Tahuna Park AMP Building	37 Victoria Road, St Kilda	Small building housing Task Force Green and Kazbah Studio Flat asbestos cement sheet Chrysolite (white asbestos) Amosite (brown asbestos)	Fibre release risk very low Asbestos fibres found in immediately adjacent to the building in soil. Moderate condition cladding present.	Cleaned all areas by removing contaminated gravel and replacing. Work carried out by Salmac Insulation. Future work to replace poor condition roof and remove asbestos cladding forecast in 2016/17 financial year. Cost incurred to date: Sample testing \$1,535 Estimated cost of remaining asbestos work: \$5,000 (estimate)
	Sims Building	100 Macandrew Road, Port Chalmers	Large industrial building, roof and partial walls clad in corrugated asbestos sheets Chrysolite (white asbestos) Amosite (brown asbestos)	Fibre release risk high Asbestos fibres found in various locations throughout the interior and further testing of the surrounding area underway	Site Isolated. Currently decontaminating and removing tenant's property – Expected cost of property removal \$16,800 (Carried out by Southern Insulation). External Risk Assessment underway with expert consultant - cost \$2,000. Testing and samples complete \$2,745. Total clean-up cost estimated at \$150,000 to \$200,000
	Botanic Garden Band stand	35 Opoho Road, North East Valley	Small Bandstand structure clad in asbestos sheets.	Fibre release risk very low Asbestos fibres detected	Date: 17/04/2016 .Decontaminated all internal areas, and sealed unsealed asbestos

			External face sealed with paint. Internal restricted are unsealed. Chrysolite (white asbestos)	in the restricted internal area.	surfaces with approved PVA product. Work carried out by Salmac Insulation. Cost: \$5,800.00 To Date: Testing samples \$1,535
	Moana Pool	60 Littlebourne Road, Dunedin	Asbestos present in the form of pipe lagging, in plant and storage areas Chrysolite (white asbestos) Amosite (brown asbestos)	Fibre release risk ranged from very low to high. Air testing confirmed no airborne fibres present, in plant or public areas. Surfaces where fibres are present and exposed asbestos material have been isolated.	Work to remove asbestos in areas that could not be isolated complete – April 2016 Further work to remove all present asbestos in operational plant areas is planned. Future removal work estimated at \$850,000. Scoping for delivery underway. To Date: Testing samples and remedial work, removal and disposal of asbestos pipework: \$14,051
			Asbestos present in isolated external cladding.	Sealed and isolated, low risk.	Condition will be monitored and maintained. Asbestos will be removed when complementary work is undertaken.

(b) A description of the type and location of the asbestos in each building or property (where known and able to be specified).

Tahuna Wastewater Treatment Plant - Chrysotile or white asbestos was found in a taped roof seal around the parapet walls on the roof over the control block. It is also likely that the Nuralite lining to the back of some parapet walls and gutter linings contains asbestos.

City Property have engaged specialist contractors to undertake investigation into properties once buildings have been confirmed they have asbestos and will undertake “invasive “ investigation of building components, particularly lagging and insulation. Under this work, samples are taken to positively identify the type of asbestos and its current state of repair.

c) The assessed level of risk in each case (including, where possible, identification of public areas in which asbestos is present).

Tahuna Wastewater Treatment Plant - Asbestos fibres in the taped seal and Nuralite product are encapsulated inside a flexible bitumous tar and this is not a friable product. When warmed for removal, this product will also not release fibres. So the risk is low.

City Property – Our current knowledge is that risk is low. A full risk assessment will come from lab test results. Details will be available from City Property in approximately three months.

(d) A brief outline of any steps taken to remedy the asbestos, or future plans to do so, for each building or property identified as having asbestos.

Tahuna Wastewater Treatment Plant - Roof cladding renewal work is currently ongoing and is expected to be complete by September, 2016. The asbestos containing material (ACM) is being encapsulated with a new membrane to avoid destructive work or disturbance to these areas. In some cases the ACM has become unstuck to the parapet wall and gutter structure and a specialist contractor has been engaged to remove these loose sections.

City Property - Unless the material is damaged or friable it is safe from being an airborne hazard. In our portfolio it is not a hazard. The material will be replaced during planned or programmed maintenance or upgrades as required.

(e) A breakdown of the dollar amount spent in each case remedied to date.

Tahuna Wastewater Treatment Plan - To date, costs to remove problematic sections of ACM add up to \$14,054.

For further remedied costs see table above

City Property – To date no money has been spent over and above planned maintenance costs. This has not yet been quantity surveyed, so a firm estimate of costs has not been provided.

In your official information request you also asked for the following:

Records of any asbestos-related finds/discoveries on public land dealt with by council or its contractors (eg Sullivans Dam), including:

- (a) Date.
- (b) Location.
- (c) Type of asbestos find and volume.
- (d) How it was dealt with.
- (e) Assessed risk to human health.

City Property has replied "Nil" to this question.

The following information comes from Water and Wastewater Services:

Unused asbestos cement pipe has been stored at the following DCC owned locations. All pipe is in good condition and, due to the location of the pipe, disposal programme in place and lack of human contact, it is deemed to be of low risk:

Sullivans Dam:

4x 2m lengths of 150mm pipe being removed by Salmac Insulation at a cost of \$2350. Programmed to be removed on the 17/6/16. This is on DCC owned land and away from public access.

Mt Grand Treatment Plant:

- 1x 4m length of 300mm pipe
- 2x 2m lengths of 200mm pipe
- 1x 300mm elbow and collar

Being removed by Salmac Insulation at a cost of \$1707, programmed for the week of 20/6/16. There is no public access to this site and employee activity has been restricted.

Brighton Reservoir:

- 1x 300mm of 200mm pipe

Pipe has already been removed by City Care at a cost of \$87. There is no public access to this site and employee activity has been restricted.

DCC intake catchment area off Longridge Rd in Silverstream:

- 20x 3m lengths of 600mm pipe
- Various collars

This is on DCC owned land and public access is restricted. Negotiations for removal under way.

If you wish to discuss this further with us, please feel free to contact me or the communications department and we can direct you to the best person for comment.

Yours sincerely

Arlene Goss

Governance Support Officer

Questions asked by Chris Morris through daily reporter process

Issue #1:

I've been told by three former DCC water department workers that 14 staff based at the Midland St yard, who worked regularly with asbestos-based pipes, died of a mix of lung, prostate and bowel cancer before reaching retirement age (most in the 50s or early 60s) over a period of about 20 years. The workers I've spoken to say they can't conclusively link the deaths to asbestos, but they have their suspicions. There is some international research linking asbestos to prostate and bowel cancer, in addition to the more well-known link with lung cancer, and Prof David Skegg says the cluster is significant enough to warrant further investigation.

Questions:

1. Is the DCC aware of the Midland St yard deaths?
2. If so, what is the DCC's view of the cluster and any link with asbestos exposure?
3. Has it been looked into or studied, and what were the conclusions?
4. If it has not been studied, should it be?

Answer

The Dunedin City Council is unaware of any deaths of its staff relating to asbestos exposure. If such a cluster existed we would be extremely concerned, but such a cluster has not been identified.

Issue #2:

I've been told the former DCC water department maintenance workers who transferred to City Care, and their AWUNZ union representatives, are in dispute with the DCC over medical checks for asbestos-related illness. The workers and the union say they were supposed to get the checks before transferring to City Care, but they say the council has refused to do so, even after the AWUNZ thought terms had been agreed.

Questions:

1. Were the workers supposed to get medical checks for asbestos-related illness, and if so, under what provision/agreement?
2. Why have the medical checks not been carried out at DCC's expense?
3. Is the DCC concerned any lengthy delay to medical checks could be exposing the former staff to greater risk of illness?
4. What is happening from here to resolve the situation?

Answer

As recently as April this year the Dunedin City Council has proactively referred workers to a health monitoring programme for asbestos and DCC have paid for this. The DCC has always taken its health and safety responsibilities extremely seriously. This is an ongoing process. The DCC has been engaging with the Amalgamated Workers Union (which represents 16 members) and City Care on this matter. In our view the Union has not acted in good faith in these matters at time which has resulted in some delays in getting staff and ex-staff assessed.