HAWK EYE BUILDING INSPECTIONS OVERVIEW

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BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Inspector: Adam Spencer

OVERVIEW OF HIGH RISK BUILDING MATERIALS

HS/1073
Phone: 0277499394
Email: adam@hawkeyebi.co.nz

INTRODUCTION

This is an overview of higher risk building materials which may be present in a home and are important to be aware of, that Hawk Eye Building Inspections would like to share with you to aid you in your property purchase.

At Hawk Eye Building Inspections we believe "THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE BETTER". We have put together this document to help you make the best informed decision.

When you find your property you are welcome to contact us to book in a comprehensive building inspection which will highlight these concerns plus more at admin@hawkeyebi.co.nz or our number below, with our trained eye and extensive knowledge we inspect the property high and low and put together a detailed, easy to understand report encompassing the NZS 4306:2005 residential property inspections and we are fully insured.

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ASBESTOS (Asbestos Containing Materials ACM)

Asbestos is dangerous when it starts to deteriorate or is disturbed during renovation or other activity. Asbestosis is **a serious lung condition caused by long-term exposure to asbestos. When an ACM is disturbed the dust spreads very easily and can contaminate large areas. Asbestos was a popular building material from the 1940s up to the 2000's. It is difficult to identify asbestos, If you are in doubt, we recommend to get a sample tested professionally.**

What should be done about asbestos in the home? Don't panic, Usually the best thing to do is leave alone any ACM that is in good condition. There is no danger unless the material is disturbed and its fibres are released and inhaled. It is important to inspect the materials regularly for deterioration such as impact damage or cracks. To prevent contamination and risks to health we recommend to use a licensed asbestos removal specialists for the appropriate handling and disposal of materials. Up to 10m2 can be removed by a non licensed professional, ensuring the correct safety precautions are adhered to. Some examples of ACM around a home are:

Fibre cement cladding (Fibrolite, Highline, Hardiplank) Fibre cement products are the most common form of ACM in New Zealand homes especially in the soffits, gables and external wall cladding. Do not sand before painting as this can send the dust airborne.

Vinyl flooring ACM were used as glue or a backing for vinyl. It is recommended testing before removing older vinyl to prevent contamination in your home

Textured ceilings were popular in the 1960s to the 1980s. When well painted it is considered safe. If installing new lighting or cutting/drilling we recommend testing first.

Asbestos-cement roofing (Super six) This is an easier product to identify due to its wider and deeper profile and fibre cement material. If in good condition it can be maintained, it is important to prevent moss growth to prevent moisture retention.

Insulation vermiculite insulation and pipe lagging may contain asbestos. If vermiculate is found in the roof space it is recommended removal due to the risk of disturbing and exposure.



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DUX QEST PLUMBING

Dux Qest is plastic polybutylene piping used in houses in the late 1970s through 1980s. The product was discontinued after reports of pipes and fittings bursting throughout New Zealand.

It is prone for splitting, along the pipes or at the plastic joins, potentially causing leaks throughout your home. If the leak happens behind wall linings/bathroom linings, this can cause extensive hidden damage, and you could be up for expensive replacement costs .

Despite the cost, replacing the pipes is preferable to simply fixing the leaks, because some insurers will not cover damage caused by Dux Qest plumbing. It is important to understand your insurance cover for this product if your home does have this product installed.

Dux Qest is easily identified. It is distinctive black piping with 'Qest Dux' printed in white lettering on the side. If a property has Dux Qest plumbing, the agent is obliged to disclose this if they are aware .

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SHADOWCLAD CLADDING

Shadowclad is a plywood exterior cladding product that is considered high risk as it needs to be installed correctly and well sealed with stain or paint regularly, to prevent damp damage. Before installing it requires to be sealed at all exposed ends and around the back of the cladding overlaps to protect. Then a regular stain/paint maintenance schedule is required. If Shadowclad is not properly maintained or installed then water ingress occurs causing warping, swelling and splitting which then requires recladding at an expensive replacement cost.

Shadowclad is a vertical pattern plywood sheet product. If looking at a home with this material then keep and eye out for swelling, warping, splitting, extra screws installed, softening of the plywood etc. as these are all signs of deterioration. The more vulnerable areas to look around are where there are low ground clearances or base of cladding, around windows, at overlaps and wall penetrations.

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WEATHERSIDE CLADDING

Weatherside is a product made from wood and glue that was a popular cladding material in the early 1980s. In many cases the glue failed and moisture ingress occurred. The cladding then swelled, delaminated and turned to weetbix. The only way to fix it is to replace the cladding. If painted correctly and is kept well maintained then it can be OK.

Weatherside was withdrawn from sale in the 1980s and a compensation package was offered, but there are still houses on the market today with Weatherside cladding, and buyers should look out for this.

It can be difficult to identify Weatherside when you're looking at a property because it looks like HardiPlank cladding, a more recent building material. There are some main ways to identify Weatherside:

- **It is slightly thicker than HardiPlank (10mm).**
- **The joiners between planks are commonly metal not plastic and wider than HardiPlank joiners.**
- **The nails are flush with the surface of the cladding rather than protruding.**
- **If there is any damage that allows you to see the base colour, look out for brown for Weatherside.**
- **Review the lower boards for rot/deterioration around nail holes.**
- **Weatherside has a bevelled edge compared to Hardiplank.**

Weatherside houses can be maintained/repaired, but the replacement can be costly.

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SCRIM WALL LINING

In homes built pre 1935 there is a risk that Scrim (Scrim & Sarking). wall lining is still present. This is a hessian or jute sacking material that has been tacked or stapled on to rough sawn, horizontally placed, thin wooden planks (Sarking).

Scrim is a fire hazard – is it dry and brittle – having been aging and drying within your house for circa 100 years. The risk of fire, and risk or significant damage from a fire, is much higher than that of a modern home. If it is observed then we recommend a licensed builder removes the scrim and to discuss all the presence with your insurance company to ensure there are no misunderstandings or exclusions.

If you suspect a house has some Scrim & Sarking wall linings i.e. It falls into the 'late 1800's to circa 1935' age bracket. Here are three tests you can use to work it out:

- **The knock test - Sarking (unsurprisingly) feels like knocking on wood. Scrim & Sarking is a very hard surface. Scrim is not always present where Sarking is left**
- **The floating wallpaper test – Scrim finished by covering the Scrim with wallpaper. Scrim starts coming away from the Sarking and gives the impression of floating, bulging or twisting wallpaper. This is especially obvious in room corners.**
- **Close inspection – With close inspection you can sometimes see hessian Scrim where wallpaper is loose or has come away.**

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ELECTRICAL WIRING

Older homes with older electrical wiring can become overloaded, where the wiring may not have been designed for the number of electrical appliances we use today. A lot of wring types and protective devices are now not up to todays safety standards . Insurers may also decline or restrict cover if either TRS or metal conduit wiring is present. It is important to be aware of insurance company requirements for older homes

Look out for:

- **Older style switches and sockets**
- **fuses that blow and circuit breakers that trip irregularly**
- **Flickering/dimming lights**
- **porcelain fuses in the fusebox, which indicate older wiring - old wiring can be a concern because of the age or type of wiring**
- **Metal Conduit wiring is an older type wiring encased in a metal surround. We recommend a licensed electrician tests this wiring and advises on condition and replacement requirements due to age**
- **TRS wiring Installed between the 1940's and 1950's. This is prone to degrading and is a high fire risk. TRS is considered a high risk and replacement is recommended by a licensed electrician for safety purposes.**

Black backing boards to fuse panels may contain asbestos. If licensed electricians are working around these panels they will need to follow safety precautions

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