

Bushfire recovery: Recycling and disposal of building materials including asbestos

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Information for property owners on how to safely recycle or remove building materials, including those that may contain asbestos, following a bushfire.

Materials not contaminated by asbestos

If your property (house or workplace) does not have asbestos-containing debris, you can sell or provide it to a recycler. Contact the recycler to establish any specific requirements they may have prior to collection.

Material that does not contain asbestos and cannot be recycled can be disposed of at a licensed landfill. Contact the landfill for any specific requirements.

For information about landfill disposal or recycling contact:

- your local council, or
- Environment Protection Authority Victoria ([03\) 9695 2722](tel:0396952722) or www.epa.vic.gov.au

Materials contaminated by asbestos

Asbestos-containing materials are very common in houses built before 1990 and are commonly found in walls, roofs, eaves, fences and electrical switch boards.

Risks associated with fire-damaged asbestos-containing material

Most asbestos-containing material in the home is 'non-friable' (bonded material). However, in a fire, non-friable asbestos has the potential to shatter and disintegrate, which can cause the material to become 'friable' (material that is no longer bonded).

Friable asbestos can easily crumble to dust and this significantly increases the risk of breathing asbestos fibres.

Breathing asbestos fibres may lead to serious diseases, such as asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

A trained person, such as an Occupational Hygienist can be engaged to identify if asbestos materials are on a property and whether the material is deemed to be friable or non-friable.

For more information about asbestos visit: www.asbestos.vic.gov.au.

Options for disposing asbestos-contaminated materials

If you believe any material is contaminated with asbestos, you have two options.

1. **Engage a licensed asbestos removalist (recommended)**

Licensed asbestos removalists are professionals trained and authorised by WorkSafe Victoria to remove asbestos. A list of asbestos removalists and the types of asbestos they are allowed to remove can be found at Victorian Asbestos Removalists.

Link:

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/ServiceProviderDirec.nsf/category?openForm&List=Asbestos+-+Licensed+Removalists&ListType=Sub>

2. Clean and dispose of the asbestos-containing materials yourself (not recommended)

If you decide to do the work yourself, it must be carried out in a way that is without risk to the homeowner or any neighboring properties, and the disposal must be done in accordance with EPA and local government requirements.

The process for removal of asbestos contamination from materials to be recycled or disposal of asbestos-containing materials is as follows.

Clean the asbestos-containing (AC) materials

1. Isolate the contaminated area with signage and barrier tape to prevent access by unprotected persons.
2. Use a skip/bin that is double lined with thick plastic sheeting (0.2mm) to place asbestos containing or contaminated materials for disposal, in combination with thick plastic bags (0.2mm) and thick tape for sealing plastic.
3. Designate an area for recycling contaminated material to be placed which should have double layered thick plastic sheeting laid down on the ground
4. Designate an area to place cleaned recycling materials for collection by recycling company away from asbestos contaminated areas
5. Set up designated decontamination area. Ensure light spraying equipment, rags and water are available.
6. Use personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - P2 filtered respirator, preferably half face respirator with cartridge (P2) respirator
 - Must be clean shaven
 - Must ensure that the respirator forms a tight seal on the face
 - Disposable hooded coveralls suitable for asbestos removal (type 5, category 3)
 - Gloves
 - Safety boots (gumboots or laceless safety boots)

Tips to minimise dangerous dust

- Keep all material for recycling or disposal wet/damp using fine water spray (a continuous fine spray may be required for some very dusty tasks).
- Avoid unnecessary breakage of AC material.
- Remove large pieces of AC material by hand if practicable.
- Do not use power tools for cutting/drilling AC material.

Recycle or dispose of the cleaned materials

1. Transfer contaminated recyclable materials to designated area on plastic sheeting.
2. Clean all visible asbestos contamination from the recyclable material.
 - Use wet cloths to remove any loose debris.
 - If asbestos contamination is difficult to remove, use hand tools such as scrapers, **do not use power tools, compressed air or high pressure water.**
3. Inspect recyclable material to make sure no asbestos contamination remains.
4. Transfer cleaned recyclable material to designated clean area.
5. If a recycling company requires a written statement that no visible asbestos contamination remains on recyclable materials, then engage a competent person to inspect and provide an Asbestos Clearance

Certificate. Transfer all asbestos contaminated material or asbestos containing materials to skip / bin for disposal.

Clean up, decontaminate and dispose of any waste

1. Decontaminate tools and any equipment used including any machinery.
 - Hose down gently using fine spray mist
 - Wet wipe surfaces
2. Decontaminate PPE by spray / wet wiping and rolling down coveralls and removing before removing respiratory protection.
3. All asbestos contaminated materials, including wet wipes, rags and coveralls must be disposed of as asbestos containing waste in skip / bin or dedicated asbestos waste bags at the end of each day.
4. Waste must be double wrapped in thick plastic sheeting (0.2mm thick builders plastic) and sealed along all edges.
5. All waste must be transported and disposed of at an EPA landfill licensed to accept asbestos waste. Refer to EPA guidance.
6. Minimise dust during transport of asbestos contaminated waste. Use sealed trucks/bins/skips that prevent leakage of waste.
7. Inspect the site to make sure all visible asbestos contaminated material has been removed.

Recycling construction material

Workplaces that process construction and demolition material, such as concrete and brick for re-use (in forms such as crushed rock), from places that may have contained asbestos are required to:

- have a process for inspecting material when it is unloaded, if possible, if not prior to stockpiling or processing to isolate asbestos contaminated material prior to processing, and
- segregate any material identified as asbestos contaminated and dispose of it as asbestos waste.

This information and further guidance can be found in the WorkSafe Guidance "Recycling construction and demolition material".

Related information

- **Bushfire recovery: Clean up of properties**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-clean-properties>

- **Bushfire recovery: Using equipment or machinery after bushfire**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-using-equipment-or-machinery-after-bushfire>

- **Bushfire recovery hazards**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/bushfire-recovery-hazards>

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Bushfire recovery: Clean up of properties

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- ◆ As the recovery process begins in bushfire affected areas, there will be a need for people to attend the worksite to help with clean up tasks, particularly on rural properties, including re-fencing work and felling trees. In some cases, they may be volunteers or family members without a background in the relevant work, such as on farms.

Clean up of properties

Tasks required to clean up properties affected by bushfire could expose you, and others, to injury from unsafe use of machinery and equipment, and to heavy-lifting and traffic hazards. Fire grounds may also present a range of unique hazards, such as tree roots continuing to burn underground, or increase the risks associated with hazards such as falling trees or branches.

Planning

- Ensure work is properly planned and coordinated. For example, provide means for regular communication, ensure sufficient supervision and plan rest breaks.
- Ensure people not directly involved in work, especially children, are not exposed to hazards like vehicle movements and operating equipment.
- Ensure machinery and vehicle operators are competent and experienced in using specific plant and equipment for the intended task.
- Some tasks may not be suitable for volunteers or even experienced employees. Tree or branch felling or cleaning up asbestos for example, should be performed by people with specific skills and experience for hazardous tasks.
- Planning should include a traffic management plan. This should include clear access to work areas and space to manoeuvre vehicles and to minimise traffic, storage and drop-off locations for the delivery of materials.
- Separate work areas from nearby roads and traffic.
- Consider arranging insurance coverage for volunteers before the work begins.

Working safely

- Ensure items of plant and equipment are fit for purpose, not fire-damaged and have appropriate guards in place.
- Ensure tools and equipment are well maintained with all cutting edges effectively guarded when not in use.
- Ensure machinery and vehicle operators are competent and experienced in using specific equipment for the intended task.
- Clear the work area of any debris or uneven terrain that could cause a vehicle rollover.

- Organise the delivery of any materials as close as possible to where they are required to minimise manual handling.
- Use powered machinery for heavy lifting. Reduce the size and weight of materials to be lifted. Limit lifting and carrying of heavy materials over long distances.
- Reduce exposure to hazardous manual handling as much as possible through the use of mechanical aids.
- Where the use of mechanical aids is not possible, rotate competent workers through various tasks to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injury from unavoidable hazardous manual handling.
- Take care with the use of wire-tensioning devices. Where practical, avoid using existing or fire-damaged materials for fencing and other rebuilding tasks. Avoid using barbed wire for fencing.

Site safety

- Are there any hazards in your work area? For example, the risk of falling branches or trees, damaged buildings, disturbed or insecure root base or shale rock.
- Are electrical services overhead or electrical, gas or other services underground?
- Unload a ute or trailer from the top side or the rear when it is on a side slope.
- Unload a ute or trailer from the top side or the rear when it is on a side slope.
- If digging new post holes, call 1100 before you dig to check whether you will be working in the vicinity of essential services.
- Is the ground stable and clear of debris for the workforce and equipment?
- Is the slope of the ground too steep to safely operate mobile equipment?
- Are there slip or tripping hazards? For example, exposed tree roots, shale rock, damaged building foundations or holes.
- Is the work area restricted - is there enough space to work or manoeuvre?
- Will your activity create other risks? For example, the collapse of structures, tree falls or equipment roll-over.
- Separate free-ranging animals, including cattle, sheep or horses from the work area.
- Are there any dangerous wildlife, like snakes for example, in the area?

Welfare of workers

- Ensure workers have access to clean drinking water and food.
- When loading equipment, use safe lifting techniques. Use lifting aids or workmates to help with heavy or awkward equipment.
- Plan regular rest breaks and limit work time to avoid fatigue.
- Provide shelter and ensure workers wear suitable protective clothing like gloves and boots and have UV protection.
- Ensure personal protective equipment is worn for eyes, ears, hands and head.
- Consider people's individual abilities to work in extreme temperatures.
- Has insurance coverage been arranged?

- If using treated pine, provide Safety Data Sheet – Copper Chrome Arsenate (CCA). Practice good personal hygiene. Minimise exposure to CCA by providing gloves and practicing personal hygiene.
- If people are working alone or in remote areas, ensure there is a means for ongoing communication.
- Prepare and provide an emergency plan to assist in the event of a person being injured.
- Provide first aid facilities.

Related information

- **Bushfire recovery: Recycling and disposal of building materials**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-recycling-and-disposal-building-materials>

- **Bushfire recovery: Using equipment or machinery after bushfire**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-using-equipment-or-machinery-after-bushfire>

- **Bushfire recovery hazards**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/bushfire-recovery-hazards>

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Bushfire recovery: Using equipment or machinery after bushfire

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- ◆ The unsafe use of mobile and powered plant after a bushfire can put you and other people at risk of injury. Guidance on this page provides basic safety advice for using mobile and powered equipment after a bushfire.

Safe operation

- Ensure you use the appropriate equipment for the task.
- Before you start, make sure you are familiar with how to safely handle and operate the equipment.
- Your equipment supplier or equipment hire company must:
 - ensure the plant is safe and without risks to health
 - provide you with written safe-use/operating instructions that explain how to safely operate the equipment
 - provide advice relating to personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn, for example, safety glasses, gloves and face masks

Site safety considerations

Working on a site where there has been a bushfire can present a range of new or unique hazards that even those familiar with the area may not have previously encountered. It is important to investigate and identify hazards in the area where you are working.

- Are there electrical services overhead or electrical, gas, water, cable internet or other services underground?
- Is the ground stable and clear of debris for yourself and the equipment?
- Is the slope of the ground too steep to safely operate mobile equipment?
- Are there slip or tripping hazards?
- Is your area restricted in terms of adequate space to work or manoeuvre or to provide adequate ventilation?
- Will your activity create risks to you or others, for example, collapse of structures, trees falling, roll-over of equipment?
- Can work be performed at ground level instead of at height? If not, have you followed the hierarchy of controls for working at height?

Hierarchy of controls for the prevention of falls

1. **Eliminate the risk of working at height by doing all or some of the work on the ground or from a solid construction.**

2. **If you cannot eliminate the risk, reduce the remaining risk by using a passive fall prevention device, for example, scaffolds, perimeter screens, guardrails, elevating work platforms, safety mesh.**
3. **Reduce remaining risk by using a work-positioning system, for example travel-restraint systems, industrial rope-access systems.**
4. **Reduce remaining risk by using fall-arrest systems, such as catch platforms, fall arrest-harness systems**
5. **Reduce remaining risk by using a ladder or implement an administrative control. Note: Ladders are not suitable for long duration or high- force tasks. Record keeping duties apply for employers using administrative-only controls.**

Safety of others

- Are other people at risk of injury from your activity?
- Have you sufficiently prevented others, including children, from entering the immediate area of work, for example, the fall zone during tree felling, loading and unloading and excluding access to any area where powered mobile plant is operating?

People in rural areas often work alone, particularly on farms. WorkSafe has guidance on its website which can help reduce the risks from working alone on farms.

[Working alone farms \(/working-alone-farms\)](#)

Safe use of equipment and machinery

Safe use of chainsaws

The main risk associated with the use of chainsaws is kickbacks – a sudden upwards and backwards movement of the chainsaw. Kickbacks occur when the upper section and tip of the chainsaw comes into contact with a log, branch etc. Avoid such contact during use.

Other factors to consider:

- Check with the supplier to ensure the chainsaw is the appropriate type/size for the intended task.
- Check the chainsaw to ensure the bar, chain and sprockets are in good condition, bar oil is flowing and the chain is sharp.
- Ensure the chainsaw is fitted with a chain brake that is clean and operates effectively.
- When not in use, carry the chainsaw with the engine off, muffler away from the operator's body and the saw blade pointing to the rear.
- Assess the risk of falling debris. For example, look out for loose branches etc. that may be released once material below it is cut and ensure material is not under tension that may cause it to spring up and hit you.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), for example, face shield or visor, earmuffs, safety boots, protective leggings and gloves.
- Hold the chainsaw securely with two hands and ensure both feet are firmly positioned.
- Ensure you have enough clear space to manoeuvre.
- Identify an escape route from the falling tree if required.
- Do not cut anything with the chainsaw above shoulder height.

- Ensure that an exclusion zone is established to prevent others from coming into contact with the chainsaw or debris.

Safe use of skid-steer loaders

Risks associated with skid steers include colliding with people, overturning, loads falling from the bucket into the cabin and injuries from exiting the machine with the bucket raised.

Factors to take into account when using a skid steer:

- Ensure the machine is always turned off and the attachment is lowered before entering or exiting.
- Ensure all safety devices, such as safety bars and reversing alarms, are fitted and functioning before operating the skid-steer loader.
- Make sure you are familiar with the operation of the machine and the controls before starting work.
- Keep people away from loading and unloading areas and the path between the loading and unloading spaces.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including safety glasses and ear muffs.
- Use a spotter to check your blind spots while the skid steer loader is being used.

The WorkSafe website has more information about controlling risks from skid-steer loaders.

[Controlling risks from skid-steer loaders \(/controlling-risks-skid-steer-loaders\)](#)

Safe use of mini-diggers (excavators)

The main risk associated with the use of a mini-digger is overturning the machine through incorrect operation on slopes or near excavations. Care must be taken when operating a mini-digger on a slope to ensure the machine does not become unstable, and subsequently overturn, due to unbalanced loads.

Factors to take into account when using a mini-digger:

- Ensure you are instructed and trained to use the digger before starting work.
- Where roll-over protection and a seatbelt is fitted, always wear the seatbelt while operating the mini-digger.
- Familiarise yourself with the controls before starting work.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's instruction to determine the maximum allowable slope on which the mini-digger can be operated.
- Always travel up and down the slope with the tracks pointing up and down the slope, never along the slope.
- When travelling up or down the slope, keep the boom arm extended and the bucket close to the ground.
- Assess the weight distribution of the plant before moving onto a slope to ensure the heaviest end is higher up the slope.
- Do not attempt to turn the mini-digger around on a slope.
- Operate controls smoothly to prevent sudden stopping or bucking.
- Always carry the load and bucket as close to the ground as possible.
- Do not overload the digger, bucket or attachment.
- Only use the mini-digger for the purpose for which it was designed, not for pulling or pushing down trees.

- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Ensure other people are not located in your work area.
- Use a spotter to check your blind spots while the mini-digger is being used.

Related information

- **Bushfire recovery: Clean up of properties**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-clean-properties>

- **Bushfire recovery: Recycling and disposal of building materials**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-recycling-and-disposal-building-materials>

- **Bushfire recovery hazards**

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/bushfire-recovery-hazards>

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Bushfire recovery hazards

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Bushfires remain a threat to people's health and safety even after the flames have passed or been extinguished. People engaged in recovery work must be aware of the wide range of hazards and risks to their health and safety during recovery work and must enter a bushfire recovery area only when a thorough assessment has identified all hazards and risks. It is important to consider hazards and risks that would not normally exist on the site.

Recovery workers must use appropriate plant and wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

Bushfire recovery hazards

High risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Gas cylinders and gas bullet tanks, including compressed gases and liquid gases such as welding gases, medical oxygen, carbon dioxide or beer gas, nitrogen, argon, helium, air, LPG, acetylene, sulphur dioxide, chlorine, ammonia	Explosion, flammable gas, oxidising gas, toxic gas	Barbecues, petrol stations, shops, houses, farms, medical and dental clinics, workshops including mines and quarries	<p>For emergencies contact 000 for fire services.</p> <p>Do not use cylinders, vessels or bullets that have been burnt or affected by fire. Contact your gas supplier for further advice.</p> <p>Consider any concealed cylinders which may be present in your environment, for example, in fridges or buried under debris.</p> <p>Cylinders containing flammable gases such as acetylene that are hot to touch should be considered extremely dangerous. Evacuate area and contact 000.</p> <p>If safe to do so, move cylinders to well-ventilated area and ensure the cylinders are restrained in an upright position. Keep cylinders cool by spraying with water or placing in a large water source, for example, a dam.</p> <p>Note: Some cylinders, vessels and tanks will vent when exposed to high heat generated during fire. This is a safety feature to reduce pressure. If cylinders, vessels and tanks are in a well-ventilated area away from people, leave them to vent and evacuate the area.</p> <p>Gas company contact numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elgas 131 161 or 1800 819 783 for emergencies • Kleenheat 132 180 or 131 351 for electricity emergencies, 131 352 for natural gas emergencies or 1800 093 336 for LPG cylinders, tanks and reticulated gas network emergencies • Origin Energy 133 574 • Supagas 137 872 or 1300 275 021 for emergencies in Victoria • United LPG 03 9413 1400 • Air Liquide 03 9697 9888 or 1300 360 202 for healthcare/medical oxygen emergencies and 1800 812 588 for transport and industrial emergencies • BOC 131 262 or 1800 653 572 for emergencies
Explosives facilities and magazines, power gel, detonators, flares, ammunition, det cord, fireworks, ammonium nitrate-based explosives	Explosion	Dedicated storage facilities, magazines, quarries, mines, farms, industrial facilities, shops	If the storage facility has been affected by fire, evacuate to a safe distance and contact WorkSafe Advisory on 1800 136 089.

Bushfire recovery hazards

High risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Live electricity, for example, powerlines	Electrocution, electric shock	Fire-damaged property	<p>Do not enter property unless emergency service officers, power authorities or the local council have advised that it is safe to do so. If you discover damaged powerlines, Energy Services Victoria recommends staying more than 10 metres clear and calling 000 if lives are in danger.</p> <p>To report damage to powerlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AusNet Services (Electricity) 131 799 www.ausnetservices.com.au• Citipower 131 280 www.powercor.com.au• Essential Energy 132 080 www.essentialenergy.com.au• Jemena 1300 131 871 www.jemena.com.au• Powercor 132 412 www.powercor.com.au• United Energy 132 099 www.uemg.com.au <p>The Australian Energy Regulator and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have information about electricity distributors in Victoria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian Energy Regulator www.aer.gov.au/consumers/who-is-my-distributor/victoria• Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning www.energy.vic.gov.au/electricity/electricity-distributors <p>Energy Safe Victoria has information about bushfire and powerline safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy Safe Victoria 1800 800 922 www.esv.vic.gov.au/safety-education/bushfire-and-powerline-safety

Bushfire recovery hazards

High risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Reticulated (piped) gas leakage	Explosion Flammable gas	Fire-damaged property with piped gas from the mains gas supply	<p>Turn gas off at the meter if there is safe access. If this is not possible move upwind and away from the area and immediately call 000.</p> <p>Contact a licensed plumber to check the installation.</p> <p>To report gas leaks or other emergencies, call your gas provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AusNet Services 136 707 www.ausnetservices.com.au • Australian Gas Networks Limited 1800 676 300 www.australiangasnetworks.com.au • Multinet Gas 132 691 www.multinetgas.com.au <p>The Australian Energy Regulator has information about gas distributors in Victoria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Energy Regulator www.aer.gov.au/consumers/who-is-my-distributor/victoria <p>Energy Safe Victoria has information about bushfire and gas safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Safe Victoria 1800 800 158 www.esv.vic.gov.au/safety-education/gas-safety-outdoors/gas-safety-and-your-bushfire-plan
<p>Unstable trees and over hanging branches.</p> <p>Many trees already weakened by continuing dry conditions have been further weakened by heat and fires. Trees and large limbs are likely to fall without warning. Tree roots can burn underground for several weeks posing a risk of unstable and hot ground.</p>	Injury or death	Fire-damaged property, roads	<p>Suspect trees need to be inspected by a competent person and then trimmed or felled as required. If this cannot be performed immediately, barricade area to prevent access. If required, for example, trees on public land, trees on boundaries to public land or trees requiring permits to remove, contact your local government for assistance. Unsafe trees and branches should be removed before any other work activity or clean-up operation is undertaken.</p> <p>Be cautious of areas where tree roots are burning underground. Wear appropriate safety footwear and test ground surfaces for stability and residual heat.</p>

Bushfire recovery hazards

High risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Unstable or damaged structures, for example, walls, chimneys, roofs and water tanks, may be at risk of collapse. Remaining free-standing chimneys, in particular, must be regarded as an imminent risk.	Injury or death	Fire-damaged property	Unstable structures should be knocked down before any work activity or clean-up operation is undertaken. If unsure about the stability of structures seek advice from your local government.
Asbestos	Delayed respiratory disease and cancer	Buildings may contain asbestos-containing material such as asbestos cement sheeting in walls, roofs, floor and floor backing, eaves and chimney flues	Wear a P2 particulate respirator, available from hardware stores, and coveralls when in an asbestos-contaminated area. Minimise activity that generates airborne asbestos fibres. Asbestos removal at a workplace must be carried out in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2017. Homeowners carrying out their own removal should refer to WorkSafe's Bushfire Recovery: Recycling and Disposal of Building Materials. Further guidance can be sourced from www.asbestos.vic.gov.au , the Environment Protection Authority and local government.

Bushfire recovery hazards

Medium risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Septic or leaking sewerage or sewer blockage	Injury	Properties with septic tanks	<p>Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn, including disposable coveralls, gloves and safety glasses/goggles for skin and eye protection. All PPE must be disposed of as contaminated waste.</p> <p>Look for collapsed or removed septic tank lids. Barricade the area to prevent access where lids are absent. Avoid walking in sewerage-contaminated areas. If the incident involves a mains sewer, contact your local water provider.</p>
Burnt copper chrome arsenic (CCA) treated timber	Toxic ash, mainly by ingestion	CCA-treated timber used in decking, pergolas, fencing, landscaping and so on	<p>Keep children, pets and farm animals away from CCA ash until it is cleaned up. Collect ash and contact the Environment Protection Authority for disposal requirements. Do not bury CCA-treated timber and do not burn it. Do not eat, drink or smoke in areas containing CCA ash.</p> <p>Practice good personal hygiene and wash hands. Minimise generation of airborne dust when working in the area.</p> <p>Wear disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing and dispose of those as contaminated waste.</p> <p>The EPA has information about ash from CCA-treated timber: https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1720</p> <p>The Victorian Government's Better Health Channel also has information about CCA-treated timber: https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/copper-chrome-arsenic-cca-treated-timber</p>

Bushfire recovery hazards

Low risk

Hazard	Risk	Location	What to do
Aerosol cans	Flammable	Houses, shops and farms	Aerosol cans are likely to have been consumed by fire. If aerosol cans have not been consumed by fire, then household quantities can be disposed of as general waste. Your local government can advise on whether aerosol cans may be included in recycling. For quantities greater than household quantities, contact your local government or chemical waste disposal company.
Diesel tanks, drums and containers	Combustible	Houses, shops and farms	<p>If tank or containers have been damaged by fire, contents should have been consumed by the fire unless tanks are underground.</p> <p>Tanks and containers that have been damaged by fire should be assessed for leakage by a competent person prior to removal or refilling.</p> <p>If tanks or containers not consumed by fire, then contact your local government or chemical waste disposal company.</p>
Swimming pool chemicals, for example, chlorine, sodium/calcium hypochlorite	Toxic gas, oxidising	Public swimming pools, house pools and chemical suppliers	<p>If chemicals have not been consumed by fire, assess condition of chemicals and containers prior to handling.</p> <p>Contact chemical supplier for additional support or disposal advice if required.</p>
Refrigeration systems containing refrigerants, for example, ammonia gas	Toxic gas	Farms, shops, houses	Contact refrigeration specialist company if system has been or may have been damaged by fire for advice specific to that system.
Pesticides and herbicides	Highly toxic	Farms, houses, sheds, nurseries	<p>These substances are likely to have been consumed during a fire. If these substances haven't been consumed or damaged by a fire, they can be kept and used.</p> <p>If they have not been consumed by fire, then household quantities can be disposed of by rinsing containers and disposing them as general waste. For quantities greater than household quantities, contact your local government or chemical waste disposal company.</p> <p>Use recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling herbicides and pesticides.</p>
General chemicals in drums or containers, for example, solvents	Flammable, toxic	Workshops, houses, shops, farms	Most substances are likely to have been consumed by fire. If containers/substances have not been consumed by the fire, contact your local government or chemical waste disposal company for disposal.
Septic or leaking sewerage or sewer blockage	Disease	Properties with septic tanks	<p>Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn, including disposable coveralls, gloves and safety glasses/goggles for skin and eye protection. All PPE must be disposed of as contaminated waste.</p> <p>Look for collapsed or removed septic tank lids. Barricade area where lids are absent. Avoid walking in sewerage-contaminated areas. If incident involves a mains sewer, contact your local water provider.</p>