

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2013 HERALDSUN.COM.AU



Asbestos dumping is putting enormous strain on local councils as they work to keep their local communities safe.

Illegal dumping exposes health risks

EVERY day Victorians are being exposed to the risk of asbestos-related disease caused by the illegal dumping of asbestos on roadsides and in public areas.

It's a menace that Slater & Gordon asbestos litigation lawyer Margaret Kent says results from a combination of factors, including a lack of awareness of the associated risks.

"People need to realise that when it comes to dealing with asbestos, taking shortcuts can cost lives," Ms

Kent says. "For the sake of saving a bit of time or money, people could be exposing children or others in the community to a deadly illness, and there can be no excuse for that."

The issue of asbestos dumping is putting enormous strain on local councils as they work to keep their communities safe.

The problem appears to be worse in parts of regional Victoria, where illegal asbestos dumps are regularly found beside highways and in State Forests alongside other

illegally dumped material.

However, there are also regular reports of people dumping in built-up areas, and a highly publicised case earlier this year involved a truck driver filmed dumping asbestos in Sydney, close to childcare centres.

"Until contractors and DIY home renovators across the board act responsibly when disposing of asbestos, innocent Victorians will continue to be exposed to deadly asbestos fibres," Ms Kent says.

"The only safe way to get

rid of asbestos from a home or worksite is by contacting an accredited asbestos removal specialist, who will ensure deadly fibres are not released into the atmosphere during removal, transport and disposal.

"Accredited specialists will dispose of the material in accordance with local council regulations at an approved site."

A list of accredited asbestos removal specialists is under Safety and Prevention on the WorkSafe website worksafe.vic.gov.au