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Contact officer: Lili Smith
Contact phone: 02 6243 1079

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Richard Hayman
Safety and Compliance Consultant
Level 4, 22 Albert Road
South Melbourne Victoria 3205

Land of the Ngunnawal people
23 Marcus Clarke Street
Canberra ACT 2601
GPO Box 3131
Canberra ACT 2601
Tel 02 6243 1111
www.accc.gov.au

Dear Mr Hayman

Auckland University of Technology – asbestos in coloured sand products – research results

As you are aware based on our previous discussions, asbestos has been detected in various coloured sand products in Australia. To date, the ACCC has published 22 voluntary product safety recalls for decorative and coloured play sand products contaminated with asbestos.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you about research findings from The Auckland University of Technology (**AUT**) into coloured sand products that contain asbestos. The research investigated whether asbestos fibres become airborne in play and cleanup activities and could be inhaled. The research used samples of children’s play sand previously sold in New Zealand and Australia.

We are advising you of this update to share with your members.

Research findings

On 1 July 2026, AUT published research findings. In summary, the findings identified:

- Tremolite and chrysotile asbestos fibres were released into the air during simulated play activities, from some sand products.
- Although asbestos fibre release was only found in air samples from tests on craft sands and not those from moulding sands, this is no guarantee that moulding sands do not release asbestos fibres;
- Due to the detection limit of the experiment, samples where no airborne asbestos was found should not be considered safe without further testing.

The findings of the research can be accessed [here](#).

Health impacts

We are continuing to engage with the [Environmental Health Standing Committee \(enHealth\)](#) and the [Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency \(ASSEA\)](#) for specialist advice on the implications of the research findings. We expect that they will need time to review the findings and form a view on whether it will have any impact on the health risk that the

recalled products pose to consumers. You can monitor enHealth's website for updates to the health advice [here](#).

Business guidance

To assist businesses in assessing and managing consumer product safety risks when asbestos is detected in products, the ACCC has consulted with specialist government agencies, and published guidance which can be accessed [here](#).

Next steps


In light of the findings of the AUT research, we request the Australian Toy Association's assistance with the following:

- Provide the information in this letter to your members
- Advise your members that:
 - the ACCC expects businesses involved in the supply of coloured sand products to conduct a risk assessment and take action, including recall action, as appropriate to address the risk to consumers.
 - Businesses must notify the relevant Commonwealth Minister within 2 days of initiating a product safety recall. This notification can be via this [online form](#), and guidance on conducting a recall is available on the [ACCC Product Safety website](#)

Please confirm whether the Australian Toy Association is willing to assist with the above by **COB 13 July 2026** and provide confirmation once any communications are made to its members. Thank you in advance for your support in engaging with your members on this.

Please contact me or Lili Smith, via email at lili.smith@accc.gov.au or via phone at (02) 6243 1079 if you have any questions or wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely



Natalie Attrill
General Manager
Risk Assessment and Operations Branch
Consumer Product Safety Division