

## Media Release

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### Power tools and asbestos don't mix – especially at Christmas

Power tools are always a popular choice at Christmas for DIY enthusiasts, but this year Cancer Council is encouraging gift recipients to do a [free online course](#) to minimise the risk of asbestos related disease in the future.

Professor Tim Driscoll, Chair, Occupational and Environmental Cancer Committee, Cancer Council Australia said the free course is designed to give the DIY home renovator basic knowledge about asbestos, and the risks and safe practices when working with or removing, small amounts of asbestos-containing material.

“It is important to understand the risk of mesothelioma and know what you can do to protect yourself as an at home renovator.

“The course is an easy and effective way of reminding your loved one that it's important to know what to look out for before they get going on those jobs you may have set them.

“It's a free online course which will add peace of mind to Christmas gift giving.

Professor Driscoll said that with the hundreds of thousands of homes built between the 1940s and the 1980s using asbestos containing materials, home renovators are the fastest growing category of victims of asbestos related disease.

“Australia has one of the highest incidence rates of malignant mesothelioma in the world<sup>1</sup>. Between 700 and 800 people are diagnosed with mesothelioma each year in Australia.”

“With the burgeoning home renovating trend, particularly with DIYers, we're now seeing a third wave of people being diagnosed, and in many cases it's because people aren't sure what they're doing when they're dealing with asbestos, or aren't able to recognise that asbestos is present.

The course, kNOw Asbestos In Your Home, takes home renovators and DIYers through how to locate asbestos, safely handle it and dispose of it, as well as learn more about asbestos related diseases.

To access the course visit <https://cancercouncil.litmos.com.au/online-courses>

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For media enquiries please contact Tegan Brown via the Cancer Council Australia media line: (02) 8063 4109 (diverts to mobile outside of business hours) or [media@cancer.org.au](mailto:media@cancer.org.au)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cancerwa.asn.au/resources/2017-06-28-mesothelioma-statistics-fact-sheet.pdf>