

## Media Release

23 June 2016

### Mooloolaba asbestos storm warning

Victims of Mooloolaba's recent destructive storms and mini-tornado could be putting themselves and neighbours at significant risk in their rush to clean-up and repair their properties, the Asbestos Disease Support Society (ADSS) has warned.

ADSS Chief Executive Officer Amanda Richards said people working on or living near Mooloolaba's storm-damaged buildings needed to take extreme care during the repair period, especially on older buildings that could have had asbestos materials.

They needed to take precautions as they removed debris, especially as the weather cleared and the material started to dry out.

"It is highly likely that the building materials from older buildings around Mooloolaba contain asbestos, yet people are being allowed to access the area without the proper protective equipment," Ms Richards said.

"A little extra care and precaution today could ward off significant health issues in the future."

Ms Richards said people should be aware that as the materials dried out after the storms and subsequent wet weather, asbestos fibres became airborne. People working with the material or even living in the vicinity were at risk of inhaling the material and having it lodge in their lungs.

ADSS recommended anyone working around these buildings to first test the materials to ensure they did not contain asbestos. Otherwise they should take all precautions possible to protect themselves and those around them from asbestos-related diseases.

"If people believe that they have been exposed to asbestos, they should contact ADSS to get an exposure form and advise their doctor to record in their medical file that they may have had contact with dangerous materials," Ms Richards said.

"It is also important to remember asbestos-related diseases had a long latency period and symptoms could take between 10 and 50 years after an exposure to show up. You can never be too careful."

If people had concerns they could contact ADSS on 1800 776 412.

**Media: Amanda Richards would be happy to do interviews. Contact John Reynolds on 0419 783 048 to arrange a time.**