KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2030 NDP

A NATION THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Policy Communiqué

Circular No. 1/2026

Date: 20 March 2026




353-363 Dr Pixley Ka Seme Street, Room No: 2020, 20th Floor, Eagle Building, Durban. Tel: +27 31 336 5366,
E-mail: Sherin.Ramluckan@kzndhs.gov.za Web: www.kzndhs.gov.za Copies obtainable from:

https://www.kzndhs.gov.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24&Itemid=131

INDEX

INTERIM GUIDELINE FOR ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT AND REMOVAL

Asbestos was widely used in construction materials prior to 1994 due to its durability and heat resistance. However, subsequent scientific evidence has confirmed that asbestos exposure is directly linked to serious respiratory illnesses, including lung cancer and asbestosis.

A significant portion of the State-financed housing stock in KwaZulu-Natal constructed prior to 1994 contains asbestos cement roof sheeting and/or wall coverings. The continued occupation of these dwellings without proper risk mitigation poses a potential public health hazard.

In line with Section 24 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and applicable environmental and occupational health legislation, the Interim Guideline for Asbestos Management and Removal was approved by the MEC for implementation with effect from November 2025.

The following is a summary of the Interim Guidelines for Asbestos Management and Removal. Please access the detailed Guideline using the following link, https://www.kzndhs.gov.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=130

1. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

The Guideline applies to:

a) Owners of State financed housing or development schemes built prior to 1994 and those built during the democratic dispensation who have a dwelling that has either an asbestos cement roof sheeting or wall coverings.
b) To any qualifying dwellings constructed through the application of any of the State housing development schemes.
c) Were constructed by means of loans and funding made available by the previous National Housing Commission, Development Board or the previous Own Affairs, Housing and Development Boards.
d) Were constructed and funded under the democratic dispensation in terms of the national housing programmes.
e) De facto tenants, where the registered owner cannot be found and the individual and/or household occupying the dwelling is not the registered owner but can prove that she/he has either:
    - A contract with the legal owner; or
    - Where she/he can demonstrate that she/he has consistently taken on the responsibilities of a tenant and acted accordingly

Exceptional Cases

The MEC may, in exceptional cases, on the submission of a duly completed application and report from a safety officer that approves the removal, disposal and replacement of asbestos roof coverings and/or wall coverings due to defects in extensions if there is clear and present danger of health and environmental hazards, subject to:

- The dwelling is owned or occupied by a person or household that is classified by the local municipality as indigent; and
- These patent defects to extensions to the original dwelling are the result of *vis major* or poor construction.

2. INITIAL ASSESSMENT

An assessment of the condition of every dwelling in each project and/or local area must be conducted and verified by the Department. The assessment must include:

- An initial site survey that records the number of sheets to be replaced per dwelling and/or homes with asbestos wall coverings that require removal, disposal and replacement.
- A risk assessment and mitigation statement for the whole project and/or local area.
- A detailed schedule of works, including a bill of quantities based on the number of overall assessments.
- A determination of the validity of the waste license and capacity of the local or nearest hazardous waste disposal site to handle and store the asbestos cement waste and/or other asbestos contaminated building products, including the disposable personal protective equipment.
- The engineer must also prescribe precautionary measures that might be required to eliminate or reduce asbestos related health risks and environmental degradation
- Provide guidance in terms of the construction methodology which must take cognizance of the occupant/s of the dwelling during the period within which the asbestos is removed and replaced, even if it requires the provision of temporary accommodation.

3. FOCUS OF THE GUIDELINE

The targeting of homes with asbestos roof sheeting will be informed by an initial risk assessment and thereafter confirmation by an AIA and asbestos contractor.

The targeting will be categorized into two areas of intervention:

Removal Works: The removal of an asbestos roof sheeting and/or wall coverings will only be considered if the material is friable, with a high likelihood of high fibre release when disturbed. In addition, the asbestos roof sheeting are in poor condition and may further deteriorate when repaired and,
Encapsulation Works: The encapsulation of an asbestos roof sheeting will only be considered if the asbestos roof sheeting is good condition, non-friable, with a low likelihood of low fibre release when disturbed. Asbestos wall coverings must **not** be encapsulated, they must be completely removed and replaced as there is a high likelihood of disturbance and damage in the future due to their proximity to humans.
The repaired or replaced structure in all projects for the replacement of the asbestos cement roof sheeting and/or wall coverings must comply with the national norms and standards in respect of permanent residential structures as prescribed in the National Housing Code.

All new housing units with a new roof or wall covering in terms of this guideline must be enrolled with the NHBRC.

4. ASBESTOS IDENTIFICATION AND REMOVAL PROCESS

The following process should be followed when projects are identified for asbestos removal and disposal:

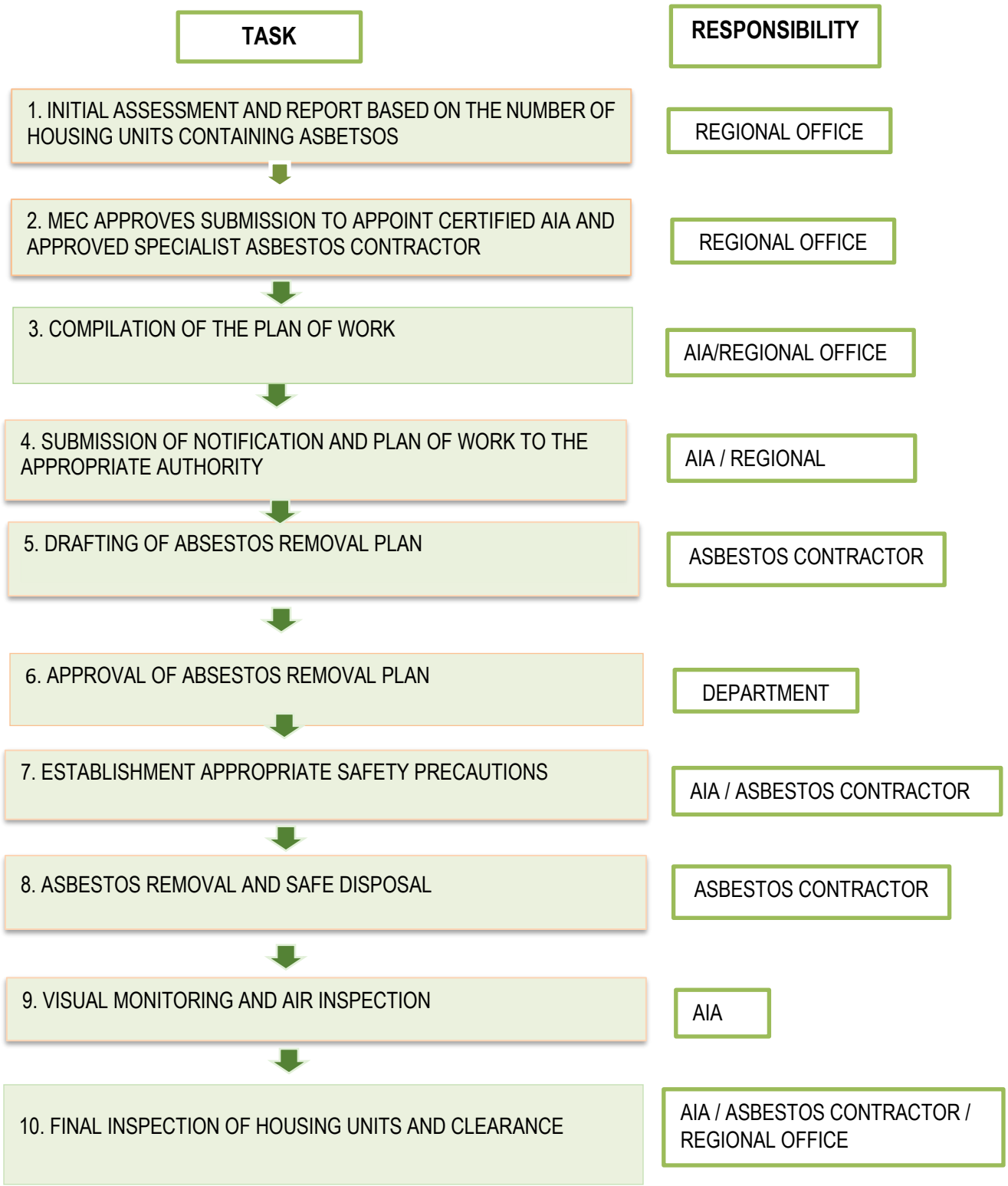
- **Initial Assessment:** The Department determines the number of affected housing units.
- Appointment of AIA and Licensed Contractor: A registered AIA and approved asbestos contractor are appointed to confirm asbestos presence, condition and scope of work.
- **Notification:** The Provincial Department of Employment and Labour must be notified at least 14 days prior to removal.
- **Asbestos Removal Plan:** A detailed, regulation-compliant removal plan must be developed, outlining methodology, safety controls, transport arrangements, landfill details and required disposal documentation.
- **Safety Precautions:** Establish containment measures, prevent fibre spread, and ensure use of appropriate PPE.
- **Removal:** Removal must be undertaken by an approved specialist contractor.
- **Waste Disposal:** Asbestos waste must be sealed, transported and disposed of at a licensed facility. Safe disposal certificates must be obtained and reconciled with quantities removed.
- **Final Inspection and Air Clearance:** Independent air monitoring must be conducted before removal and 48 hours after completion. Results must be submitted to an approved laboratory to confirm compliance with required air quality standards.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role Player	Key Responsibilities	Compliance Requirements
Project Manager (Department)	• Appoint registered AIA and accredited Type 2/3 asbestos contractor • Obtain updated asbestos inventory prior to commencement • Compile Regulation 15 Plan of Work with contractor • Submit Plan of Work 7 days before commencement for acknowledgement • Provide site-specific guidance to contractor • Oversee air monitoring (Reg. 16) • Issue written reports with findings and recommendations • Ensure final clearance (Reg. 22) • Ensure proper containerisation, transport and disposal of asbestos waste • Ensure decontamination of vehicles and reusable containers • Ensure PPE provision for all waste handlers • Ensure disposal contractors comply with regulations • Ensure PSPs include AIA services	• Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 • Asbestos Abatement Regulations, 2020 (Regs. 15, 16, 21, 22) • Environment Conservation Act, 1989 • National Environmental Management Act, 1998
Approved Asbestos Contractor	• Conduct job-specific risk assessment before work begins	• Asbestos Abatement Regulations, 2020

Role Player	Key Responsibilities	Compliance Requirements
	• Undertake beneficiary administration where required • Arrange relocation/temporary accommodation (Emergency Housing Programme compliant) • Identify hazards and affected persons • Implement elimination or risk-reduction controls • Record and communicate findings to Department • Ensure workers understand risk controls • Use SABS-approved PPE where required • Prepare site-specific Plan of Work • Implement exposure control measures (wet methods, enclosures, PPE/RPE) • Provide decontamination procedures • Ensure compliant waste management and emergency procedures	• Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 • Municipal by-laws • SABS standards for PPE
Approved Inspection Authority (AIA)	• Conduct planned air monitoring (Reg. 16) • Provide monitoring results to contractor and Department • Keep records of assessments, air monitoring and asbestos inventory (50 years) • Make records available to health & safety representatives • Issue written reports with findings and recommendations • Oversee demolition and removal process • Ensure final clearance in terms of Regulation 24 • Confirm prohibition of reuse, resale or recycling of asbestos materials • Ensure no compressed air use for dust removal • Ensure no demolition before asbestos identification and safe removal	• Asbestos Abatement Regulations, 2020 (Regs. 16 & 24) • Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993

6. PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM



7. COST GUIDELINE

The following is a guide for the determination of costs when undertaking asbestos testing, demolition and removal. The costs are based on the average costs received per task by registered service providers. Each task has variables that may influence the final determination of costs. These variables include, the number of test samples required, the size and number of units, site distance and location to authorized disposal sites, etc.

Asbestos Testing

TASK	AVERAGE COST (INCLUDING VAT)
1. Prepare Notification, Work Plan, Submission and Approval from Department of Labour	R4 850
2. Bulk Sample Asbestos Collection	R1 541 **Hourly rate**
3. SANAS Laboratory Test Costs	R1 006 **Per sample**
4. Compilation of Final Report	R 838

Asbestos Demolition and Removal

TASK	AVERAGE COST (INCLUDING VAT)
1. Preliminary and General/Site Establishment	R 7 103 **Per unit cost**
2. Dismantling and Safe Removal of Asbestos Cement Product	R 292 **Per m² cost**
3. Air Monitoring by AIA	R18 472 **Dependent on scope & location**
4. Treatment, Collection and Transportation of Asbestos Waste	R 9 268 **Dependent on-site distance & location**
5. Ethical Disposal of Asbestos Waste Material	R 1 678 **Dependent on-site distance & location**

------- END ------

REVISED KZNDHS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (EIP)

In 2022, the MEC approved the Department's Environmental Policy to promote sustainable housing development. Subsequent legislative developments under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) required provincial organs of state to prepare and implement an Environmental Implementation Plan (EIP).

In view thereof, the Environmental Policy was reviewed, and a comprehensive Environmental Implementation Plan was developed and approved by the MEC in January 2025 to operationalize environmental governance within the Department.

1. PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The revised Environmental Policy and EIP enables the Department to:

- Measure and manage environmental impacts across all operations.
- Promote environmentally sound human settlements.
- Ensure compliance with environmental legislation.
- Integrate sustainability across the housing project lifecycle.
- Promote environmental awareness among staff, contractors and communities.

The policy and EIP applies to all Departmental officials, municipalities, developers and service providers and to all stages of the housing project process.

2. KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE EIP

KEY IMPLEMENTATION AREA	STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE SECTION
Environmental Compliance and Monitoring	Ensure that all projects meet environmental regulations and integrate Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)	1. Conduct EIAs at the planning stage for all projects. 2. Set up compliance checks during construction to monitor adherence to environmental standards. 3. Establish a review committee for environmental compliance reports to ensure accountability.	**Integrated Planning** **Policy & Research**
Energy Efficiency and Emission Reduction	Promote renewable energy use and implement energy-saving measures	1. Install solar panels on new housing units where feasible. 2. Incorporate energy-efficient appliances and lighting (e.g., LED lights). 3. Encourage passive design principles, like natural ventilation and insulation, to reduce energy needs.	**Project Management** **Integrated Planning**

KEY IMPLEMENTATION AREA	STRATEGY	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE SECTION
Water Conservation	Install water-saving devices and promote rainwater harvesting systems	1. Fit low-flow fixtures (e.g., faucets, showerheads) in all new developments. 2. Promote the implementation of rainwater harvesting policy for residential buildings (urban projects). 3. Encourage landscape designs that use indigenous, drought-resistant plants.	**Project Management** **Integrated Planning & GIS**
Waste Management	Encourage recycling, reduce construction waste, and manage hazardous materials	1. Encourage on-site waste separation facilities to sort recyclables, construction debris, and hazardous materials. 2. Implement a recycling incentive programme to encourage residents to reduce waste. 3. Create guidelines for construction sites on proper disposal of hazardous materials.	**Project Management** **Policy and Research** **Municipal Support**
Biodiversity Protection	Incorporate green spaces and protect natural habitats near development sites	1. Designate protected areas near developments for conservation. 2. Integrate native plant species into landscaping to support local biodiversity. 3. Plan for eco-friendly corridors to facilitate wildlife movement in housing areas.	**Integrated Planning & GIS** **Municipal Support**
Training and Capacity Building	Equip staff with knowledge and skills on sustainable practices	1. Conduct bi-annual workshops on current sustainable construction and environmental practices. 2. Develop an environmental manual for staff as a reference for daily practices. 3. Partner with environmental organizations to provide specialized training for key personnel.	**Consumer Education** **Policy and Research**
Stakeholder Collaboration	Work with local communities, NGOs, and other government departments	1. Establish regular meetings with local NGOs to collaborate on environmental awareness programmes. 2. Set up a community forum for residents to discuss environmental concerns and ideas. 3. Partner with the Department of Environmental Affairs for joint projects and guidance on eco-friendly practices.	**Municipal Support** **Consumer Education** **Policy and Research**

3. METRICS & INDICATORS TO MEASURE PROGRESS

To measure the progress and effectiveness of the Environmental Implementation Plan (EIP), the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements has established a set of metrics and indicators which is outlined in the EIP. These metrics provide clear, measurable benchmarks that allow the Department to track achievements, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability in implementing sustainable practices across all projects. By regularly monitoring these metrics, KZNDHS can assess its success in reducing environmental impact, fostering community collaboration, and promoting resource-efficient practices within human settlements.

4. SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM GOALS

GOAL	DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
Short-Term Goals		
Compliance with Environmental Regulations	Ensure all new projects meet basic environmental regulatory requirements.	**3 years**
Environmental Training	Conduct workshops on environmental policy and sustainable building practices for staff.	
Waste Reduction Strategy	Develop a policy to minimize construction waste in all housing projects.	
Medium-Term Goals		
Energy and Water Audits	Conduct energy and water usage audits on projects to establish baselines and identify areas for improvement.	**5 years**
Sustainable Building Standards	Adopt sustainable standards (e.g., energy-efficient lighting, eco-friendly materials) in 50% of new developments.	
Community Environmental Education	Implement environmental education programmes for residents to promote sustainable practices.	
Long-Term Goals		
Full Implementation of Green building Standards	Ensure all new developments adhere to green building standards and guidelines.	**10 years**
Renewable Energy Integration	Integrate renewable energy sources (e.g., solar panels) in 80% of housing projects.	
Zero Waste in Construction	Achieve zero waste in all construction projects through advanced waste management practices.	

------- END ------

GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN STANDARDS OF 40m² AND 45m² HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements currently delivers top structures as prescribed by the National norms and standards. The house is constructed as per the relevant National Housing Programme and the housing typology. Over time, the top structure finishes through the various parts of the province began to differ due to the interpretation of the different implementing agents and professionals used. This resulted in inconsistencies in the products delivered in each project. These included aspects such as the exclusion of aprons, the varying types of roof sheeting used, etc.

This resulted in a need for uniformity to be introduced to bring about consistency in the housing product delivered throughout KwaZulu-Natal. The standard designs and finishes would assist project monitors to enforce compliance by the different implementing agents.

The delivery of free-standing low-income BNG houses required guiding principles regarding both rural and urban house layouts. The design typologies are to inform the standard of stand-alone residential units built in KwaZulu-Natal.

The Guidelines for the Design Standards of 40m² and 45m² Housing Typologies was approved by the MEC for implementation with effect from November 2025.

1. APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The guidelines including the designs and bill of quantities (BOQ) are applicable as the prescribed standard for all subsidized 40m² and 45m² urban and rural stand-alone residential units built in KwaZulu-Natal.

The following specifications will apply to the typologies delivered:

- Roofs may be corrugated sheeting or concrete tiles (optional & dependent on weather conditions in the area)
- Beneficiaries must be given the opportunity to choose paint colour (6 colour options)
- Where there is no electricity in the area, provision must be made for a ready board, and electrical testing must be done using a generator.
- An electrical Certificate of Compliance (COC) must be issued by a registered electrician where electricity is provided
- A concrete apron must be paved around the house and around the ventilated improved latrine (VIP)
- The VIP must be a minimum of 2.9 cubes
- The VIP must have a 3m (minimum) to 10m (maximum) walkway for a wheelchair bound person (applicable to 45m²)
- A utility room (1.8 x 1.8) with a door fitted and a 2-lever lockset must be provided for rural areas
- The water tank is to be placed on a 2500mm x 2500mm x 450mm high block tank-stand which includes a 20 Mpa foundation and 20 Mpa concrete stand
- Burglars Bars must be installed for persons with disabilities (not to exceed the amount of the prevailing subsidy quantum)

- Home solar system (500 W) (not to exceed the amount of the prevailing subsidy quantum)

Any deviations from the guidelines must be accompanied by the required technical motivation from the relevant professionals.

All housing typologies must comply with the following Regulations:

- SABS 0400 NBR
- SABS 1200AB
- SANS 952-1985
- SANS 10400

2. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Directorate / Role Player	Key Responsibilities
Chief Directorate: Sustainable Human Settlements	• Administer implementation of the Guideline • Facilitate overall implementation across programmes Notify Policy, Research and Product Development Directorate of identified shortfalls or risks during implementation
Policy, Research and Product Development Directorate	• Review the Guideline after three (3) years or earlier if required
Departmental Inspectors	• Monitor compliance with prescribed design specifications and approved construction materials
Chief Directorate: Monitoring & Evaluation	• Monitor and evaluate implementation of the Guideline

Designs have been compiled for 40m² and 45m² free-standing low-income BNG houses supported by a detailed bill of quantities.

------- END ------

The detailed policies/documents as well as the designs and BOQs in this edition of the Policy Communique may be accessed on the Department's website using the following link: https://www.kzndhs.gov.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=130