

Media Release

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Workplace Safety



Thursday, 28 February 2019

ASBESTOS TASKFORCE KICKS OFF IN THE LATROBE VALLEY

A dedicated asbestos taskforce for the Latrobe Valley has got underway, ensuring locals have their say over the removal of dangerous asbestos waste material from former power station and industrial sites.

Today Latrobe Health Advocate and taskforce Chair Jane Anderson kicked off the very first meeting of this important forum that will help boost confidence in the removal of asbestos from industrial sites across the Valley.

A key election commitment from the Andrews Labor Government, the Latrobe Valley Regional Asbestos Forum will bring together government agencies, local groups, councils and unions to make sure there is a consistent and transparent plan for removing and disposing of asbestos contaminated materials from local industrial sites.

The taskforce will design a plan for the management, demolition, transportation and disposal of asbestos waste material from sites including the decommissioned Hazelwood Power Station and the Energy Brix Australia site at Morwell, and ensure the community is fully engaged throughout the process.

Australia has one the world's highest incidence of malignant mesothelioma per capita, with more than 700 new cases diagnosed each year – due to the previous widespread use of asbestos.

Quotes attributable to Workplace Health and Safety Minister Jill Hennessy

"We promised a dedicated taskforce for the Valley to ensure that dangerous asbestos waste is removed in a consistent and transparent manner and we've delivered."

"This taskforce will ensure the communities views are heard, as we support the development of a proper plan to remove asbestos from former industrial and power station sites."

Quote attributable to the Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"Asbestos-related deaths and diseases have long cast a shadow over the Latrobe Valley – the work of this taskforce will give our communities a greater level of confidence in the safety and transparency of future asbestos waste removal, containment and storage."