

# Measuring change in awareness and attitudes towards asbestos

LATROBE VALLEY ASBESTOS SURVEY RESULTS  
2019 – 2022



LATROBE VALLEY  
ASBESTOS TASKFORCE

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## BACKGROUND

The Latrobe Valley Asbestos Survey has been conducted annually by the Latrobe Valley Asbestos Taskforce (the Taskforce) since 2019, when the Taskforce was commissioned by the Victorian Government to review how asbestos is managed, handled and disposed of across the broader Latrobe Valley region. The scope of the Taskforce encompasses public and private, residential, commercial and industrial sites and locations.<sup>1</sup>

The survey information collected has been used by the Taskforce to develop education and awareness tools and campaigns to improve understanding of the dangers of asbestos exposure across the community, particularly in the residential setting.

This report tracks changes in the level of awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards asbestos across the wider Latrobe Valley community from 2019 – 2022 via the annual asbestos survey.

Each survey was published online on the Engage Victoria<sup>2</sup> platform, with hard copies available on request. Hard copies were returned in 2019 only. The survey was promoted broadly on social media, and advertised in local papers across Baw Baw Shire, Wellington Shire, and the City of Latrobe.

The table below represents the number of responses received in each year, and the percentage of survey respondents who self-identified as home renovators and answered the questions in the home renovation section.

Year	No. respondents	Home renovators*
2019	133	68%
2020	109	61%
2021	144	61%
2022	107	62%

\*The percentage of total respondents who self-identified as home renovators

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<sup>1</sup> The Terms of Reference can be viewed at <https://www.asbestostaskforce.net/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://engage.vic.gov.au/latrobe-valley-asbestos-survey>

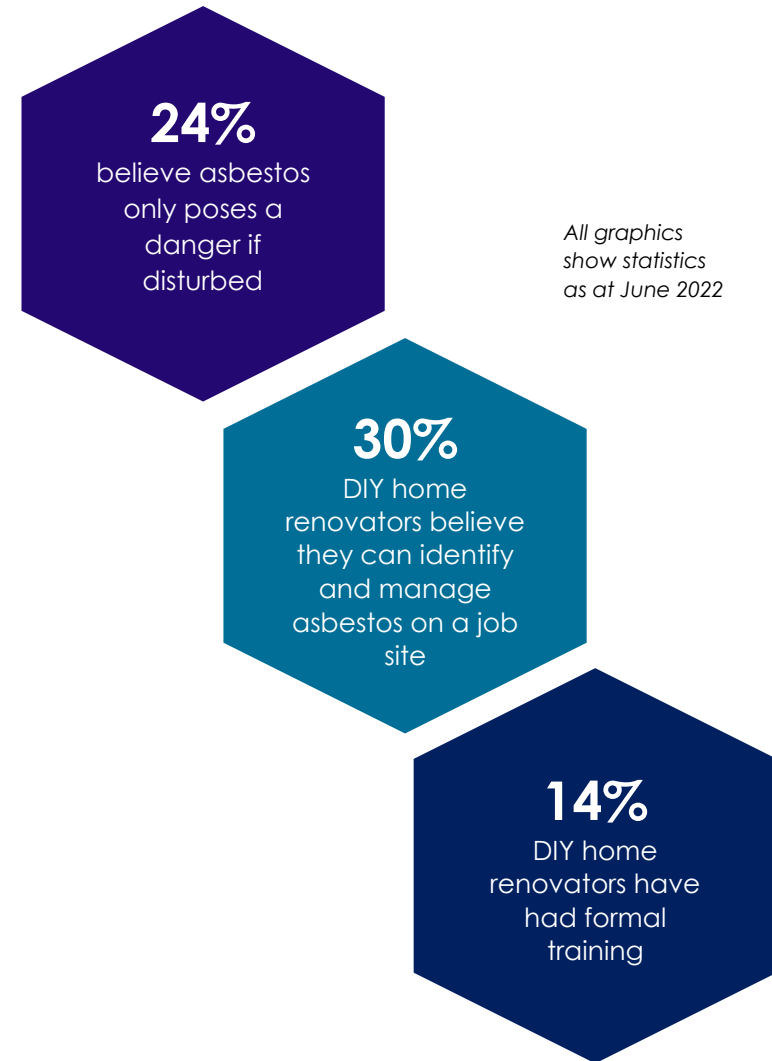
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the historical use of asbestos in Latrobe Valley's power stations and railway industries, many families have been affected by asbestos, and the area is well known for its high rate of asbestos-related disease. However, the use of asbestos-containing materials in the built environment up until 1990 goes far beyond the Latrobe Valley, and today it is believed that one in three Australian homes contain asbestos.

As detailed in a 2020 study published by the Taskforce,<sup>3</sup> it was common for planning schemes in the mid-20th century to mandate the use of asbestos cladding for the rebuilding of properties following bushfires. Due to its widespread popularity as a building product, Australian homes built or renovated between 1940 and 1990 are very likely to contain asbestos.

All surveys from 2019 – 2022 have reported a very high level of awareness of the dangers of asbestos, and the belief that the community should be made aware of the risks of asbestos exposure. While in the recent past, it has been common for people to believe that asbestos products are fine if you leave them alone, there is now a greater understanding that asbestos-containing materials are coming to the end of their product life, and are naturally degrading and releasing asbestos fibres. In 2019, 63% believed asbestos only posed a danger if disturbed. In 2022, this has gone down to 24%.

Another positive result in the 2022 survey has been the continuing decline in the number of people who say they are confident or very confident in their own ability to identify asbestos-containing materials. This has fallen from 39% in 2019 to 22% in 2022. This indicates that as more people become aware of the volume of different types of asbestos products, their confidence level in being able to identify asbestos-containing materials has declined.



<sup>3</sup> Estimating the volume of residential asbestos remaining in the Latrobe Valley – A Model, 2020. <https://www.asbestostaskforce.net/publications/>

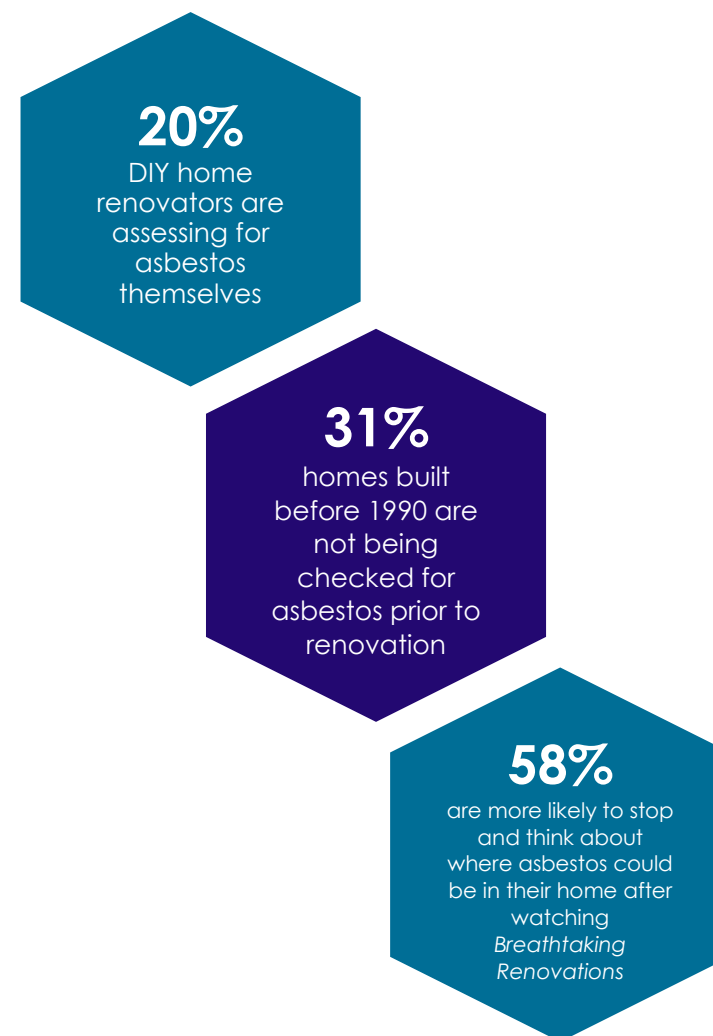
Home renovation or improvement activities continue to be popular, and in 2022, 55% of respondents have been involved in renovations on properties built before 1990, and 74% state they would do at least part of the work in a kitchen or bathroom renovation themselves. While in 2019, 56% of DIY home renovators believed they could identify and manage asbestos on a job site, this has fallen to 30% in 2022. This still remains a concern however, as only 14% of DIY home renovators have had formal asbestos training.

With regards to home renovation works recently completed, the number of home renovators assessing for the presence of asbestos themselves has decreased but is still very high at 20%, down from 36% in 2019.

A success for the Taskforce has been the *Breathtaking Renovations*<sup>4</sup> video, which has been part of a social media campaign and also broadcast on television in Gippsland. Half (49%) of this year's survey respondents had seen *Breathtaking Renovations*, with 58% saying they were now *more likely or much more likely* to stop and think about where asbestos could be in their home.

Awareness of the Latrobe Valley Asbestos Taskforce has now grown to 70%, which is a good result considering the participants in this survey who have never either lived or worked in the Latrobe Valley is the highest recorded at 21%; three times the number in the original 2019 benchmark survey.

Despite the clear progress made by the Taskforce, concern remains that almost one in three properties (31%) built before 1990 are still not being assessed for asbestos prior to renovation. This is significant as two thirds of respondents (62%) indicated they were planning to undertake home renovations in the future, and 90% of all home renovators surveyed did some of the renovation works themselves. The importance of a professional assessment to avoid potential asbestos exposure is therefore a key area in which to concentrate future awareness efforts.



<sup>4</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v\\_9mGDcxL8I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_9mGDcxL8I)

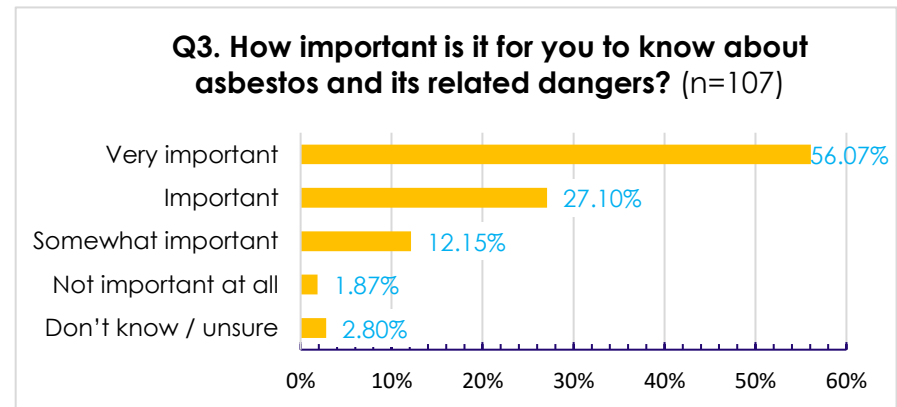
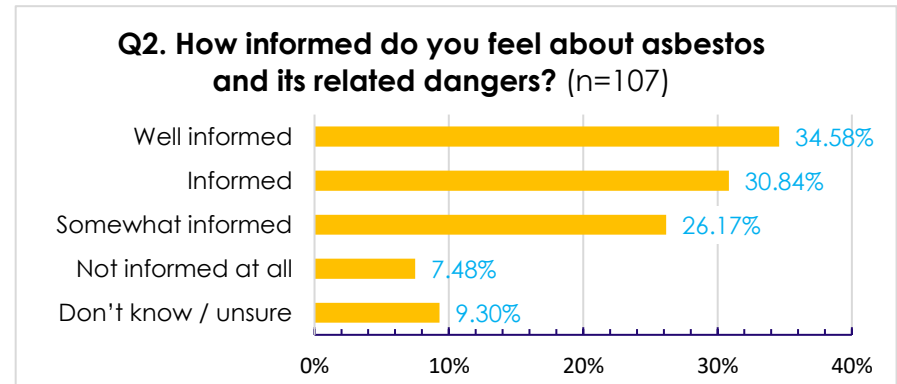
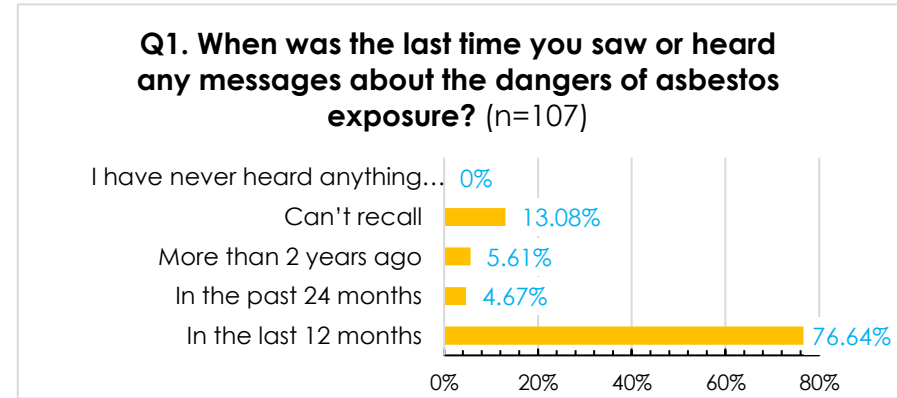
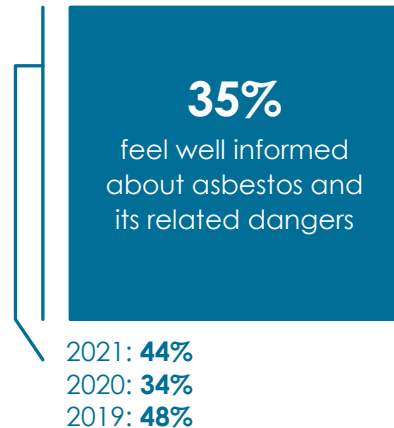
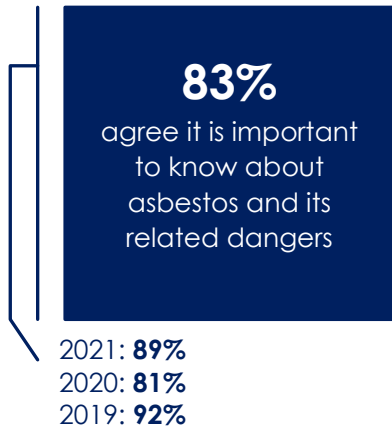
# SECTION 1 GENERAL POPULATION

## Asbestos awareness

### Information and messaging

Of the 107 respondents to the 2022 survey, 77% reported being exposed to messages about the dangers of asbestos in the last 12 months, and 83% agreed it is important for them to know about asbestos and its related dangers.

While there are fluctuations in the figures of those who say they feel *well informed* about asbestos and its related dangers, this appears to be in line with the age of respondents, with a higher number of respondents aged over 50 in both the 2019 and 2021 surveys. People aged over 50 are more likely to have seen messaging about asbestos, and are also more likely to have undertaken home renovation or improvement activities than younger cohorts.



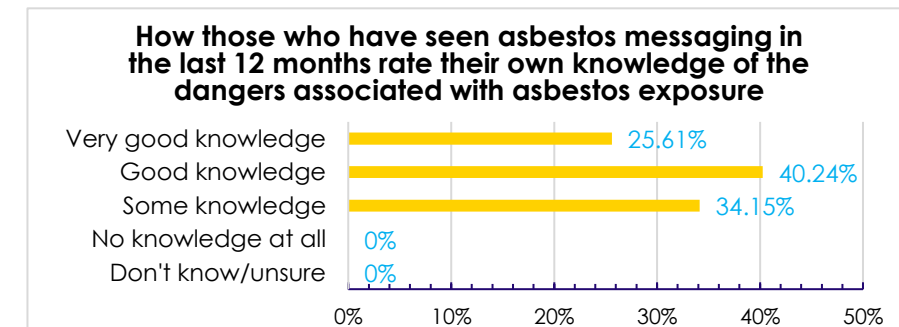
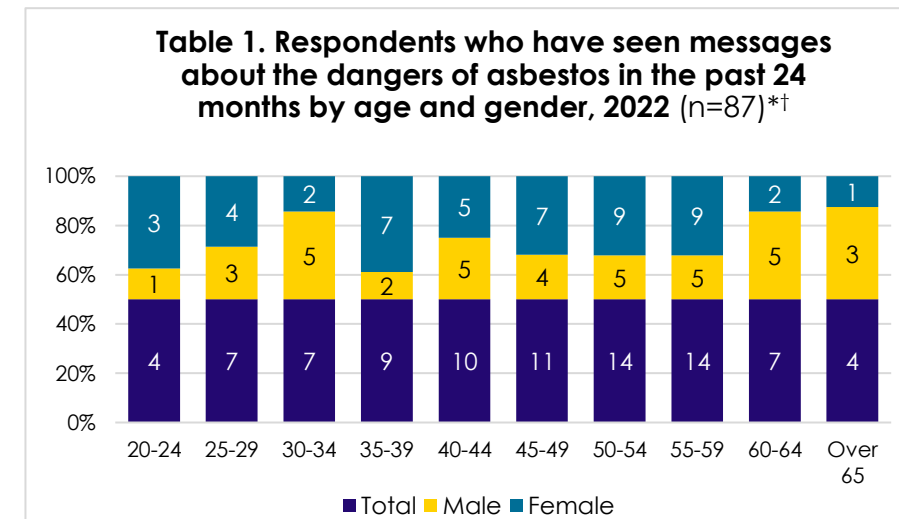
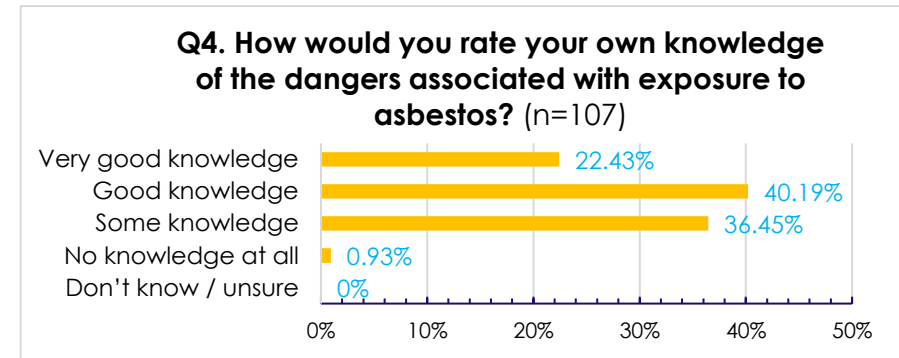
63% rate their knowledge of asbestos-associated dangers as good or very good in 2022.

Of the 2022 survey respondents who have seen or heard messaging about the dangers of asbestos in the last 12 months, 66% rate their knowledge of the dangers associated with exposure to asbestos as good or very good. This is a decline on the previous surveys, and may be a result of the *Breathtaking Renovations* video, with many becoming increasingly aware that they do not know where asbestos can be commonly found in the home.



\*One respondent replied "Prefer not to say" to the question "What gender do you identify as?" For simplicity, this response has been removed from the table.

†Age brackets with no respondents have been removed from the table.



## Identifying asbestos-containing materials and risks of asbestos exposure

With only 35% of respondents saying they know where asbestos should be safely and legally disposed in 2022, this indicates the need for further education about asbestos waste being a hazard (designated as priority waste by the EPA), and the legal requirements surrounding how and where it can be legally disposed.

In 2019, 39% said they were confident or very confident in their own ability to identify asbestos-containing materials. This has declined to 22% in the 2022 survey.

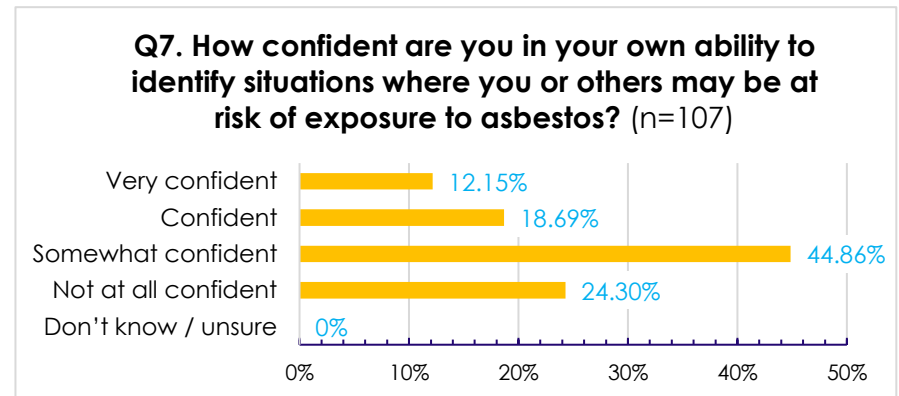
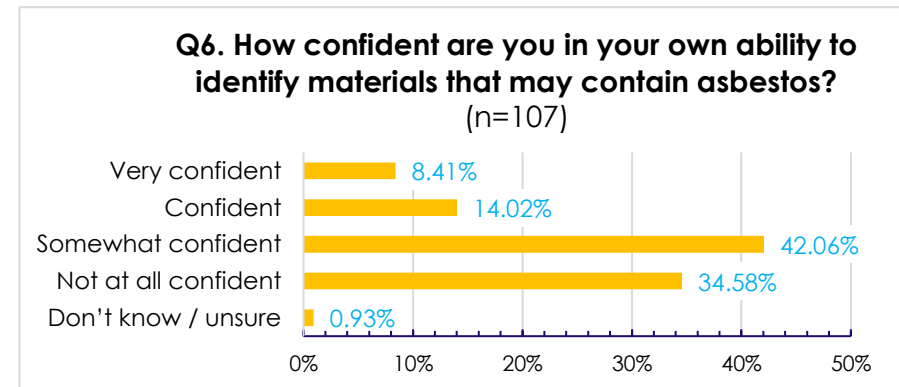
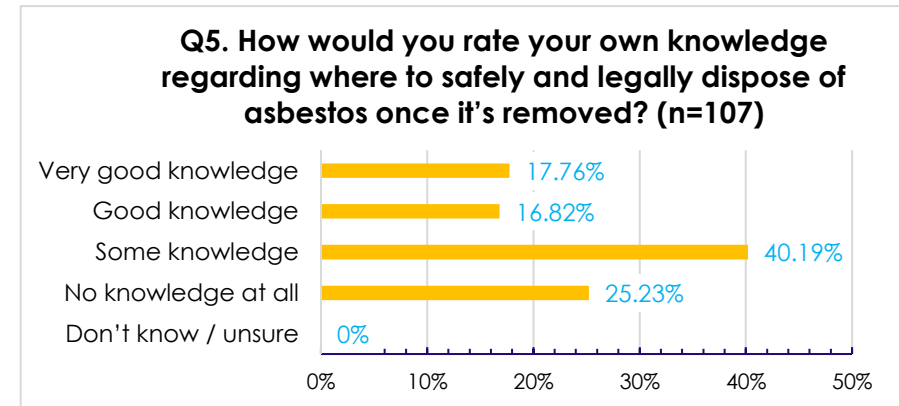
Three out of ten (31%) are confident in their own ability to identify situations where they or others may be at risk of exposure to asbestos, which has remained steady since 2020.



2021: **23%**  
2020: **30%**  
2019: **39%**



2021: **30%**  
2020: **30%**  
2019: **39%**





## Formal training

Respondents were asked whether they had received any formal training in relation to the management of asbestos on a building site, including how it must be packaged and how to legally dispose of it.

Fewer than one in five had received any formal training in any of these areas. 75% didn't know how asbestos must be packaged for disposal, and 70% didn't know where asbestos can be disposed of safely and legally.

Of the respondents who said they were confident or very confident in their ability to identify materials that may contain asbestos (22%), only one in ten had received formal training in how asbestos needs to be managed in any building renovation or demolition work.

**18%**

have had formal training in how asbestos needs to be managed in any building renovation or demolition

2021: **19%**  
2020: **22%**  
2019: **29%**

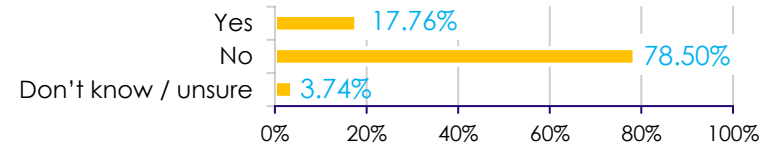
**11%**

say they are confident in their ability to identify asbestos-containing materials **and** have had formal training

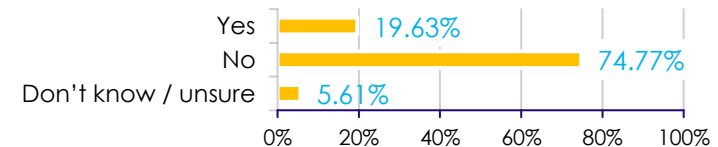
2021: **12%**  
2020: **16%**  
2019: **18%**

\*Respondents who stated they had done their own research or have not had formal training have been excluded from Q9.

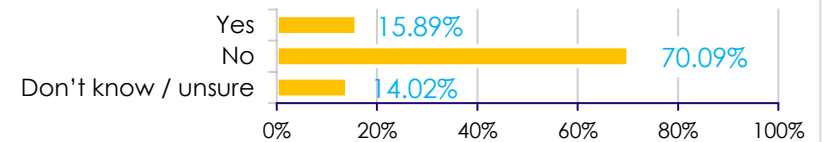
### Q8a. Have you had any formal training in relation to asbestos and how it needs to be managed in any building renovation or demolition work? (n=107)



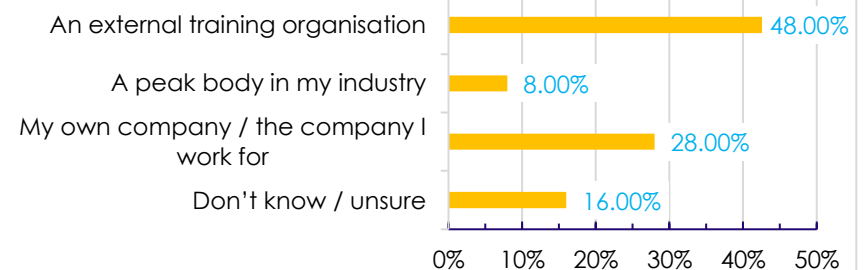
### 8b. How asbestos waste must be packaged (double-wrapped, sealed etc) for safe disposal? (n=107)



### 8c. Where to safely and legally dispose of asbestos waste (n=107)



### Q9. Who delivered this training? (n=25)\*



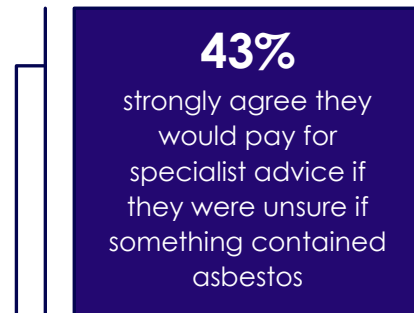
## Awareness of the dangers and presence of asbestos

For Question 10, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements 10a – 10h. In 2022, one in four people agree that asbestos only poses a danger if disturbed.

Since the 2019 benchmark survey this marks a 39-point reduction and indicates a significant increase in awareness about asbestos product deterioration and the risk of fibres being released by ways other than being actively disturbed.



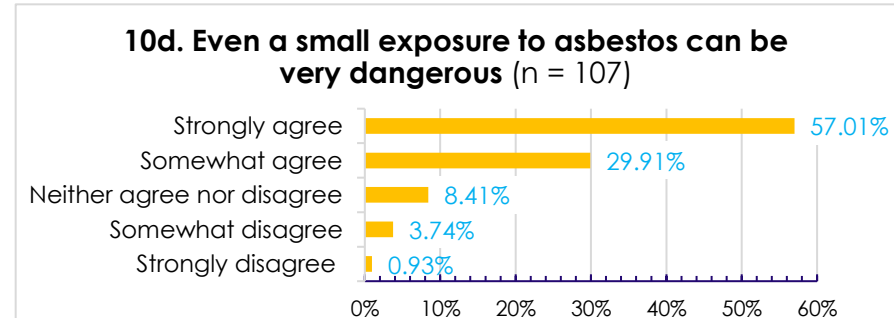
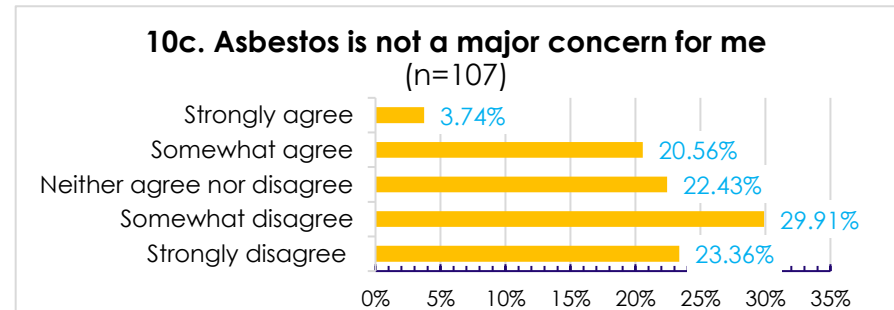
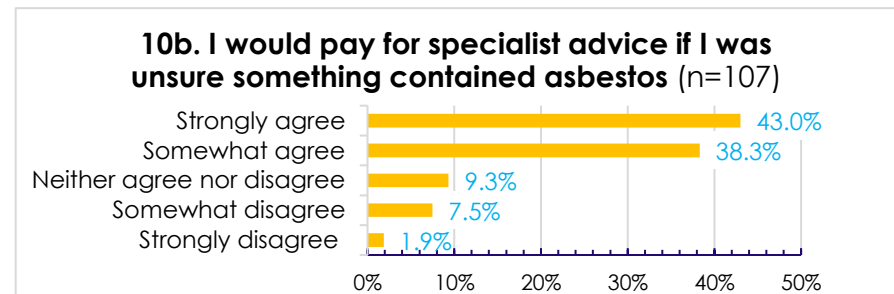
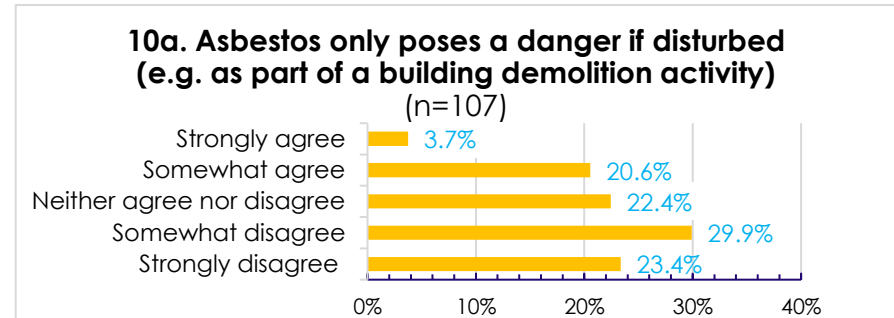
2021: **52%**  
2020: **75%**  
2019: **63%**



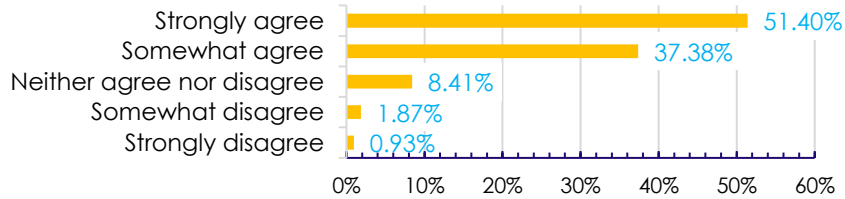
2021: **57%**  
2020: **46%**  
2019: **45%**



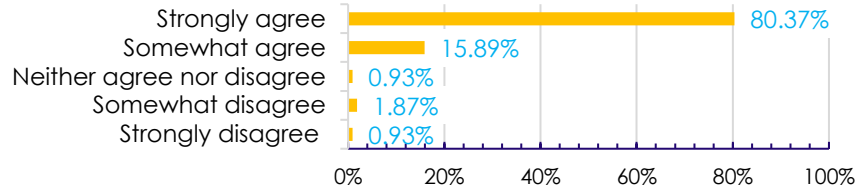
2021: **85%**  
2020: **83%**  
2019: **89%**



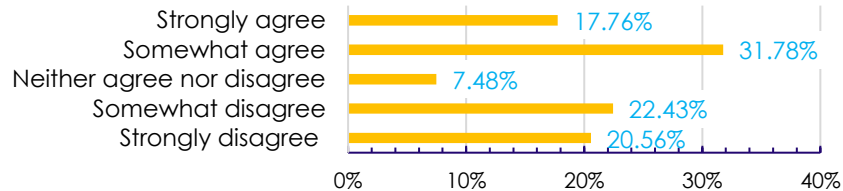
**10e. Asbestos is very common in Australian buildings (n = 107)**



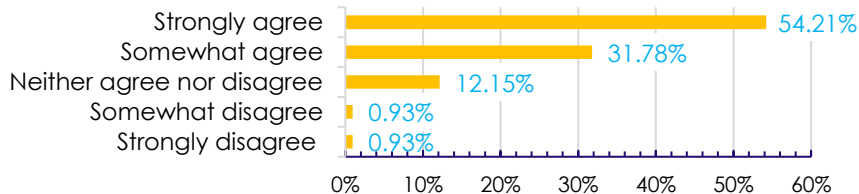
**10f. Anyone doing renovations needs to be very mindful of asbestos (n = 107)**



**10g. I know how to go about disposing of any asbestos that was found on my property during a renovation (n = 107)**



**10h. More needs to be done to ensure that asbestos is disposed of safely to protect public health and the environment (n = 107)**



The level of agreement with statements regarding the prevalence of asbestos and the need to be mindful when doing renovations has remained consistent since 2019. Q10g was added in 2021, and the results are near-identical, with 49% agreeing in 2021 they know how to dispose of asbestos found during renovation, and 50% agreeing in 2022.

**89%**

agree that asbestos is very common in Australian buildings

2021: **92%**  
2020: **88%**  
2019: **87%**

**97%**

agree that anyone doing renovations needs to be very mindful of asbestos

2021: **96%**  
2020: **96%**  
2019: **98%**

## Breathtaking Renovations video

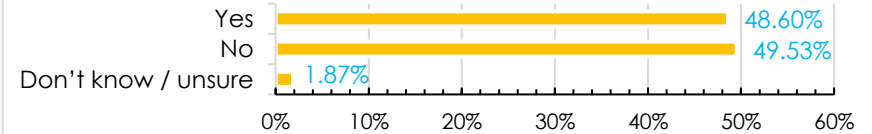
Of the 49% of respondents that viewed the *Breathtaking Renovations* video produced and launched by the Latrobe Valley Taskforce in September 2021, 58% stated they were 'more likely' or 'much more likely' to stop and think twice about where asbestos could be in their home.



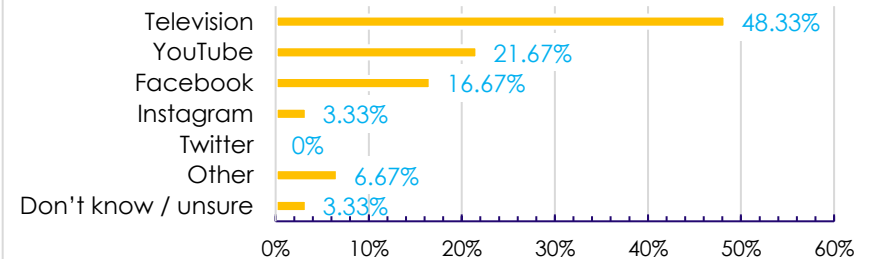
\*Respondents could select more than one answer

### Q18. Have you seen the video about the DIY renovator who can't start works because of all the places asbestos could be in the home?

(n=107)

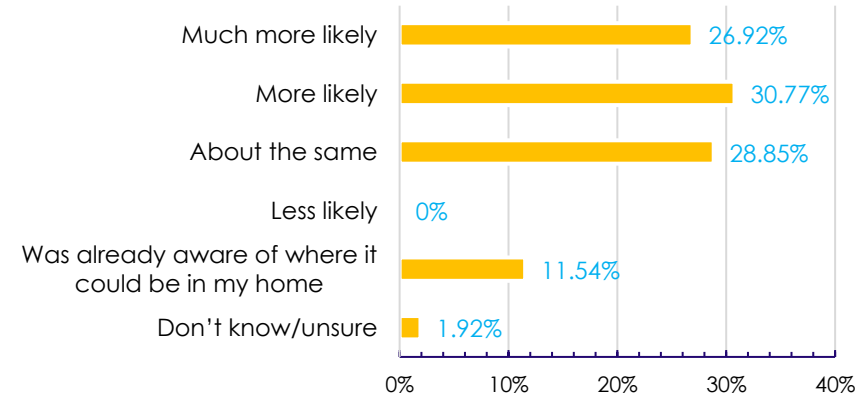


### 18a. Where did you see it? (n=60)\*



### 18b. Are you now more likely to stop and think about where asbestos could be in your home after viewing the video/television commercial?

(n=52)



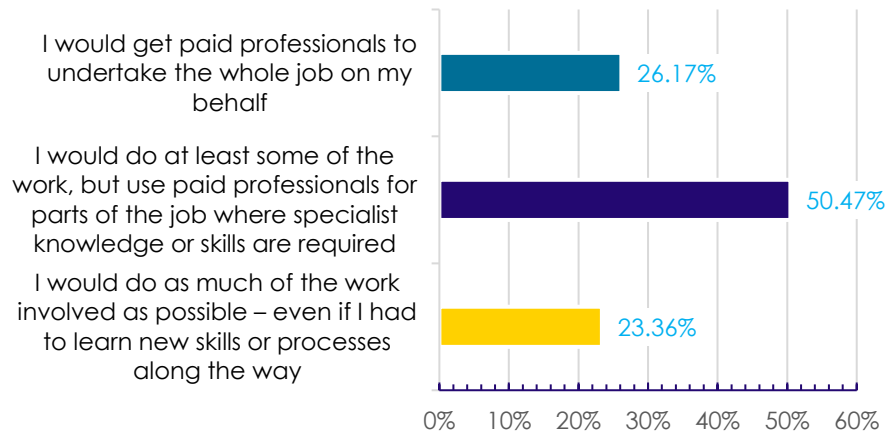
## Home renovation activity

In 2022 the majority of respondents (**76%**) say they would undertake at least some – if not all – of the work themselves in the renovation of a bathroom or kitchen. This aligns with previous results – 2019: **74%**, 2020: **73%**, 2021: **78%**.

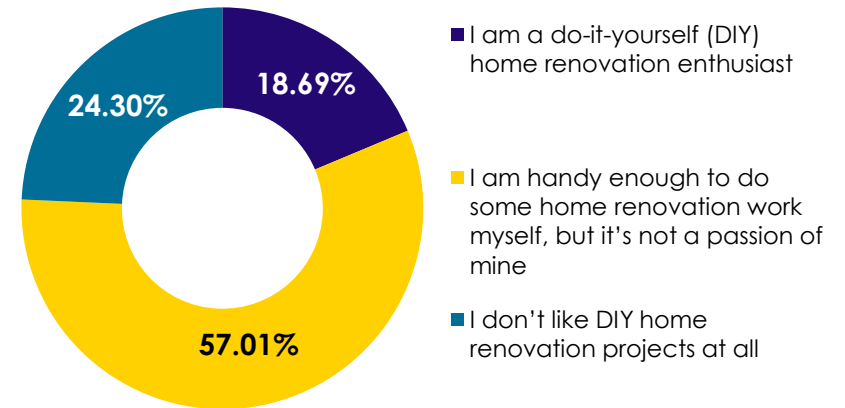
Of home renovation work already undertaken, **54%** reported in 2022 that they had worked on properties built before 1990. The figures previously reported were 2019: **68%**, 2020: **56%**, 2021: **60%**.

The higher numbers in 2019 and 2021 are likely linked to the higher number of respondents aged over 60 in those surveys, who are more likely to have undertaken renovations in their lifetime.

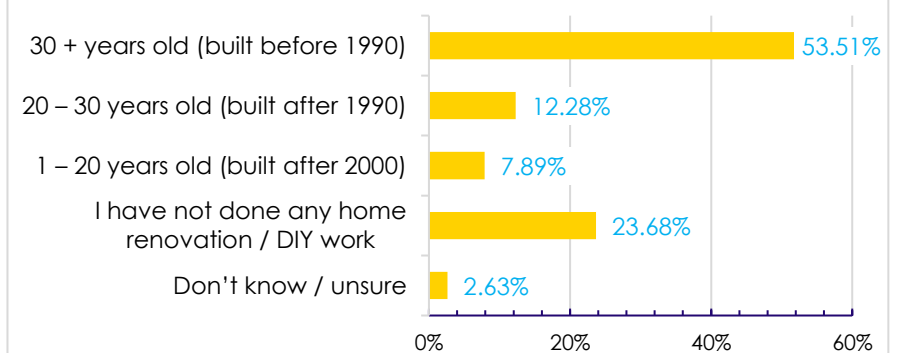
### Q11. Imagine you need to renovate the bathroom or kitchen in your own home. Which of the following best describes how you would approach this? (n=107)



### Q12. Which of the following best describes you? (n=107)



### Q13. In terms of any home renovation / DIY work you have undertaken, roughly how old are the properties you have worked on? (n=114)\*



\* Respondents could select more than one answer

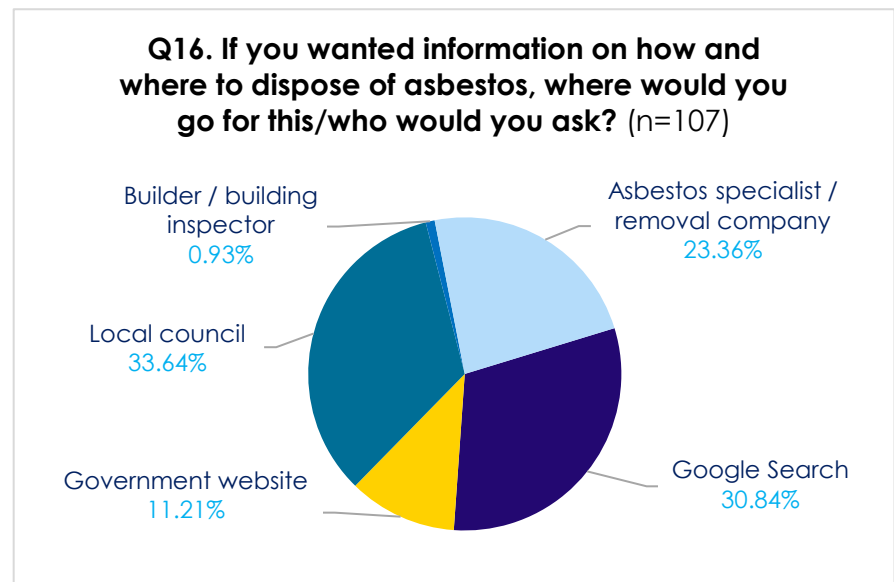
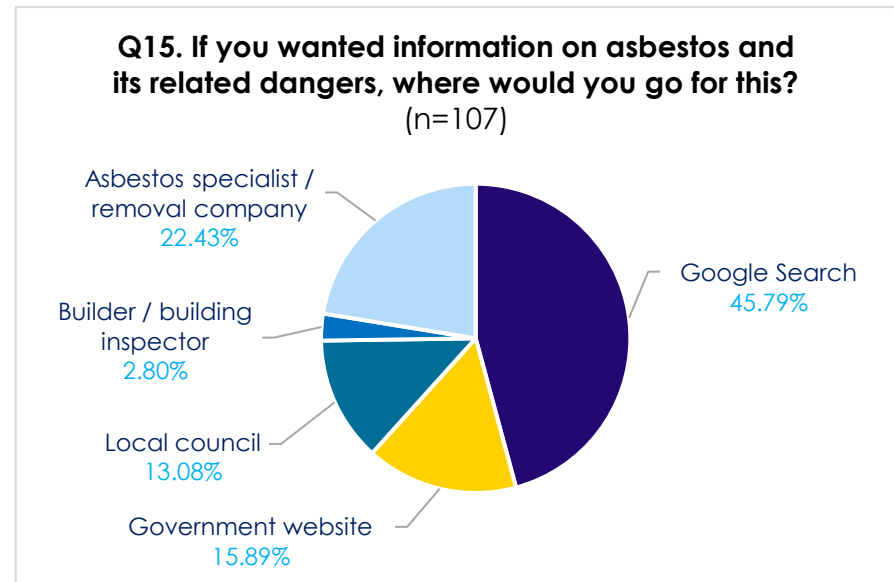
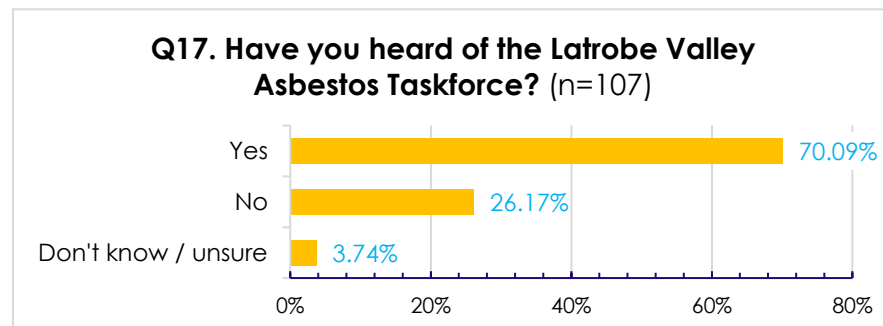
## Where people go for information about asbestos

This survey revealed the primary source of asbestos information is the internet, with 46% respondents saying they would use Google Search. This has increased by 7 points since 2019, when it was at 39%.

In 2019, 20% said they would go to an asbestos specialist/removal company for information. This trended upwards in 2020 and 2021 with 32% returned in both surveys, however in 2022 it is back down to 22%.

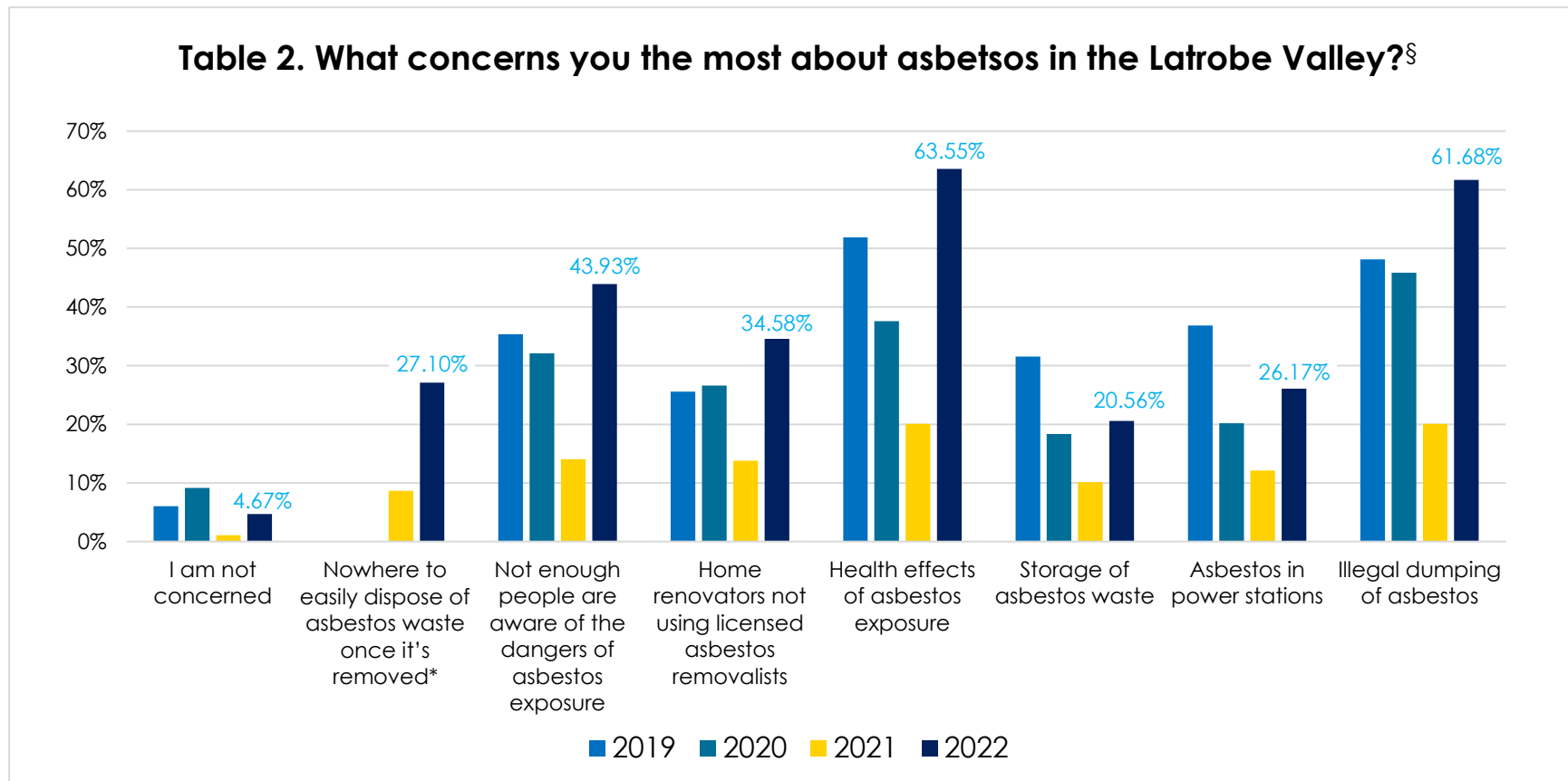
Question 16 was added in 2021, and the contact point for most is still local council at 34% (37% in 2021). There has been a drop in those who would contact an asbestos specialist (from 32% to 23%) and a corresponding increase in those who say they would use Google Search (from 17% to 31%).

Awareness of the Latrobe Valley Asbestos Taskforce has increased to 70%, up from 44% in 2019.



## Concerns about asbestos

As shown in Table 2 below, the greatest concerns about asbestos in the Latrobe Valley continue to be the health effects of asbestos exposure, and the illegal dumping of asbestos. In this year's survey, over one quarter (27%) said they were concerned about having nowhere to easily dispose of asbestos, which is three times as many as in 2021 (9%). There is also increasing concern about home renovators not using licensed asbestos removalists, and not enough people being aware of the dangers of asbestos exposure.



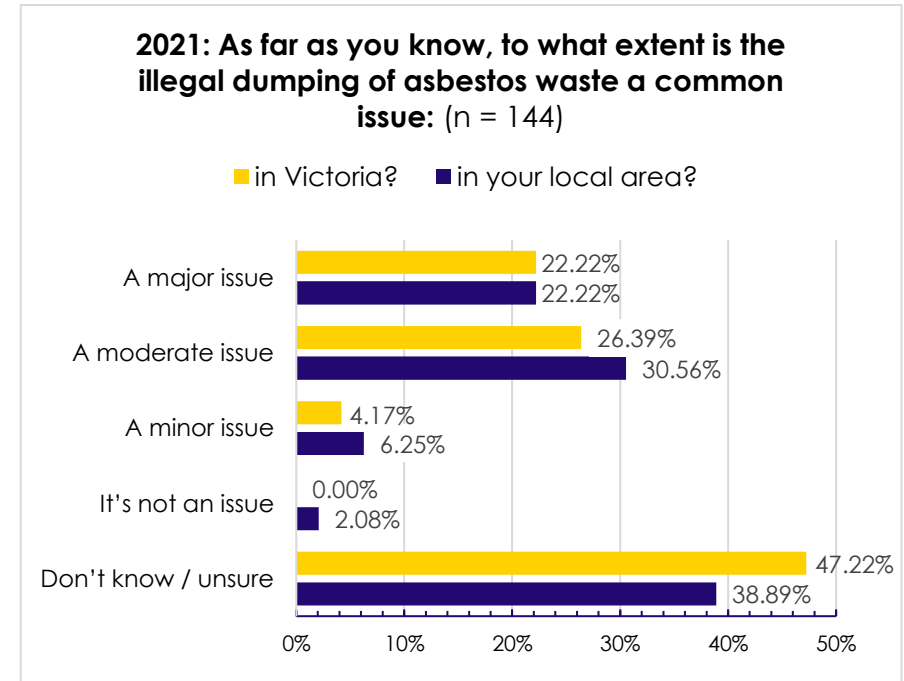
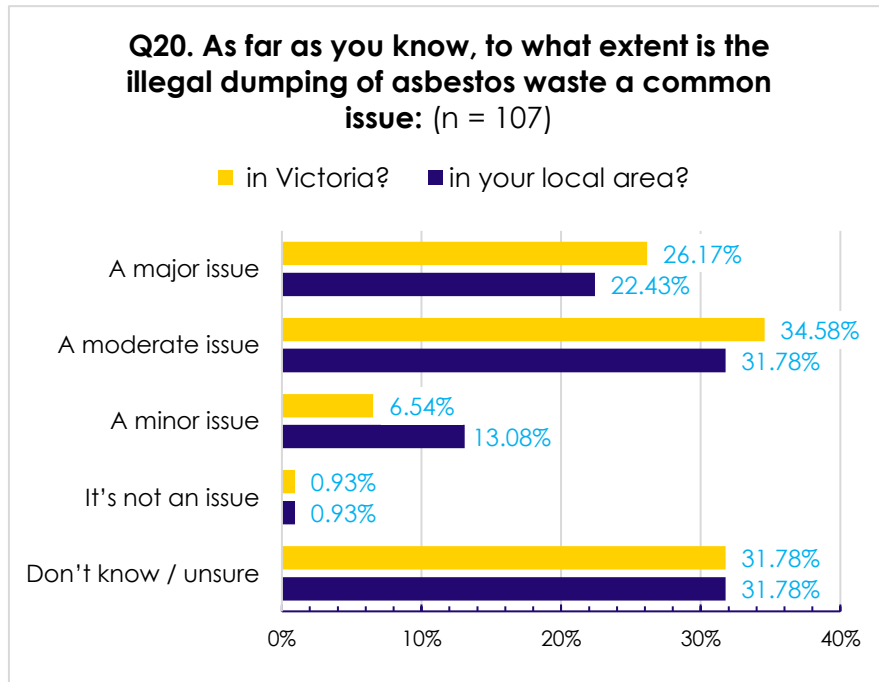
<sup>§</sup> This is a multi-select question and respondents were able to select more than one answer.

\*This question was added in 2021.

Note: In 2019 and 2020, respondents were able to select "All of the above" and 49% and 41% selected this answer respectively.

## Illegal dumping of asbestos

The below question was asked for the first time in 2021. Both sets of responses indicate there is a high level of awareness of the illegal dumping of asbestos as being a common issue.





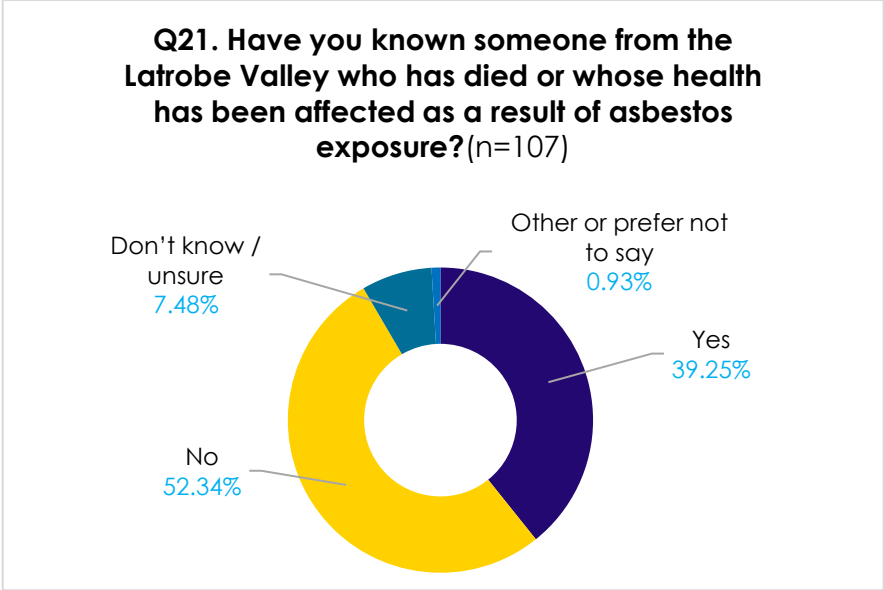
## Personal impacts of asbestos

With only a small sample of the respondents aged over 65 (4%), the personal impacts are still high for many people of working age, with 39% respondents answering yes to Question 21.

In 2019, with a far higher number of respondents aged over 65 (20%), two in three (65%) said they knew someone who had died or whose health had been affected as a result of asbestos exposure.

As mentioned previously, the over-65 age group is more closely linked to asbestos-related disease, due to the typical long latency period between exposure and diagnosis, and therefore the assumption follows that this group is more aware of the health impacts of asbestos exposure.

*Asbestos has affected our family over three generations*



### Past survey comments

It's horrible to watch family members die from exposure to this product.

It's an extremely horrible way to die and even worse to watch someone go through it. I lost my dad and his two brothers who died from it.

Hate the material, has taken many workers in the valley.

It killed my husband - there is no such thing as safe exposure to asbestos.

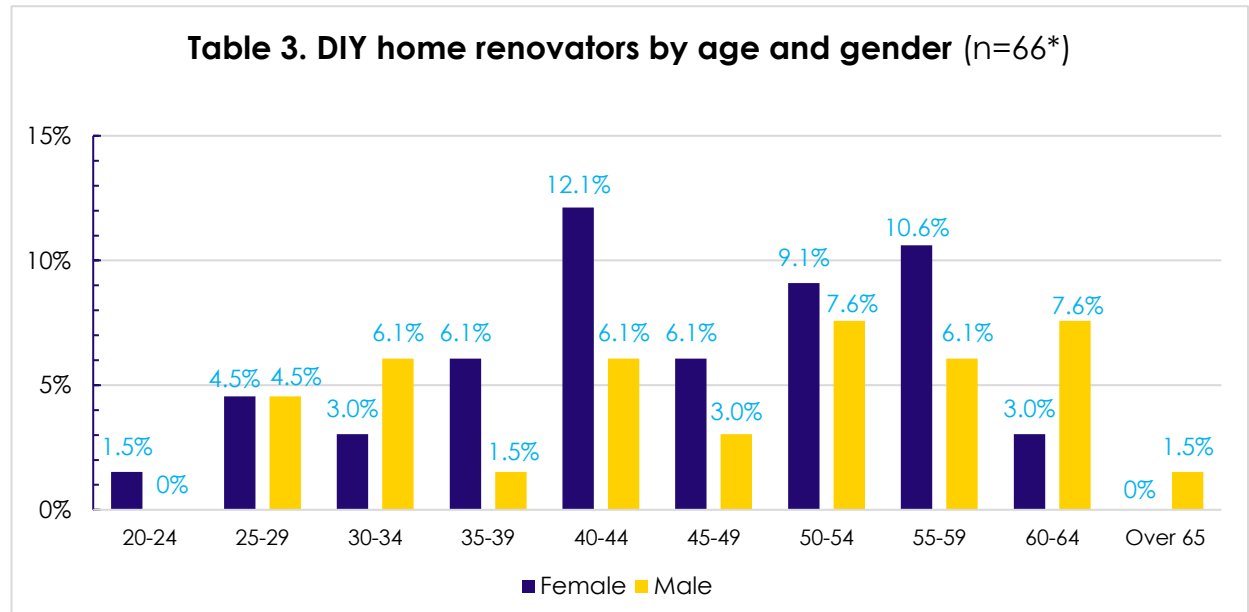
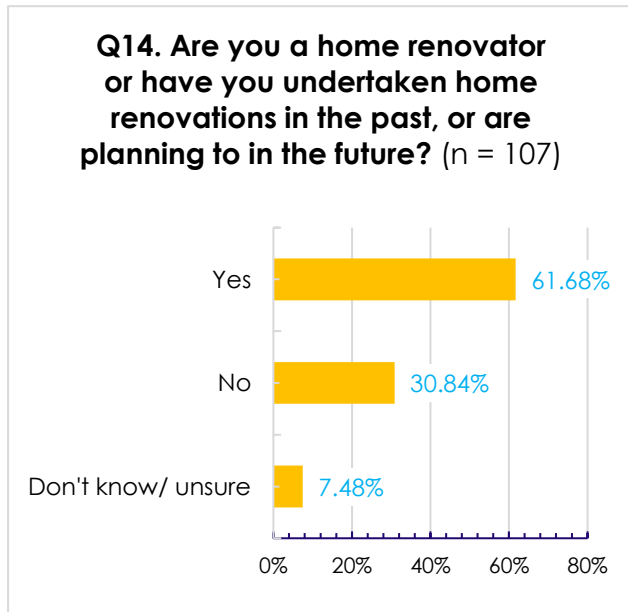
When I was 15 my first job was removing asbestos, I have scarring on the lungs!

## SECTION 2 HOME RENOVATION

Of the 107 people who participated in the 2022 survey, 62% answered “Yes” to the question “Are you a home renovator or have you undertaken home renovations in the past, or are planning to in the future?” Those who answered yes were asked to respond to a further 12 questions pertaining to home renovation activities.

As shown in Table 3 below, most respondents were aged between 50 -59 years.

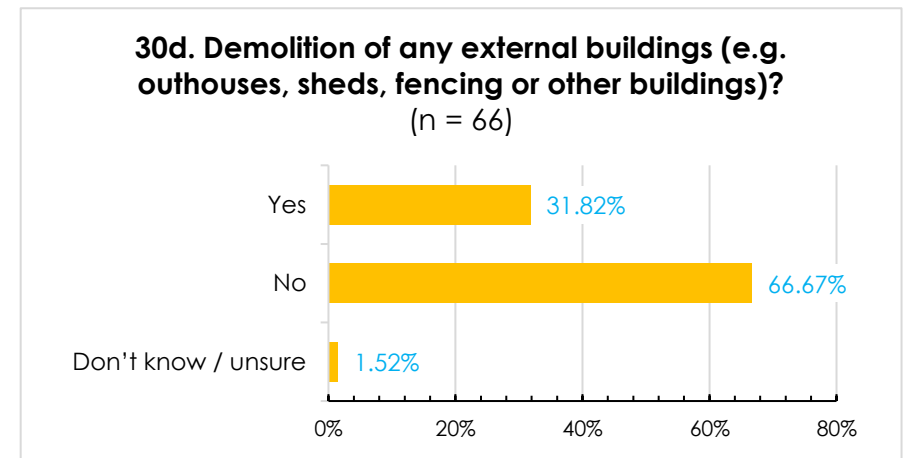
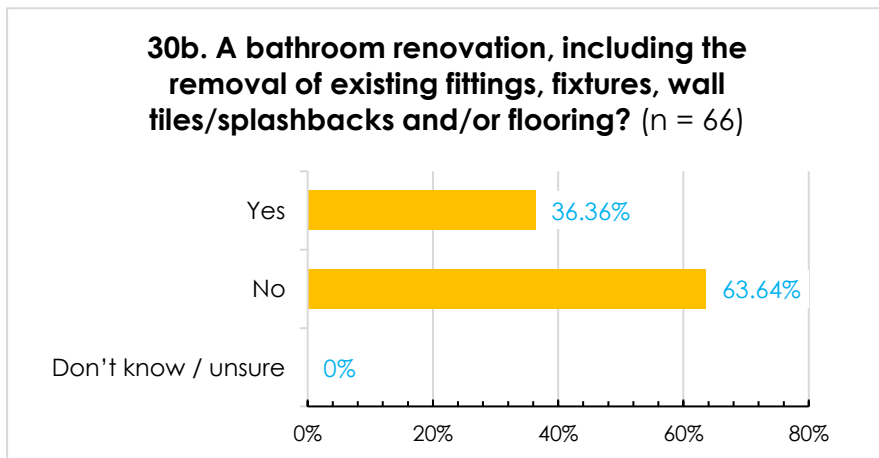
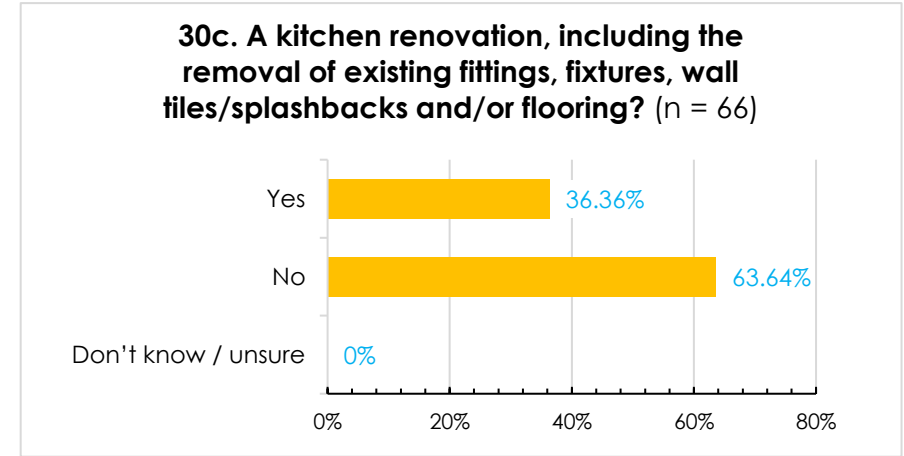
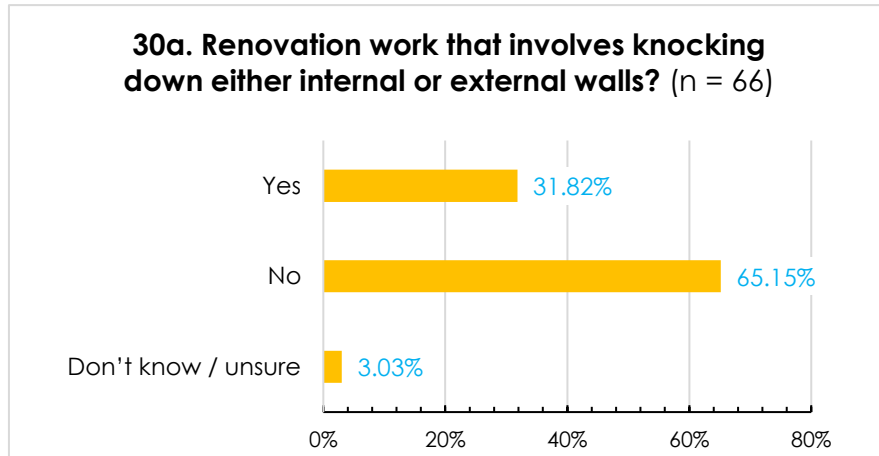
The results suggest that DIY activity remains high with the vast majority of respondents (90%) doing at least some of the work themselves. Two thirds (62%) are planning to undertake renovations in the next 12 months which is a significant increase from 2021 (35%). This highlights the importance of ongoing asbestos awareness campaigns to ensure renovations are undertaken safely.



\*One respondent answered: “Prefer not to say” to the question “What gender do you identify as?” For simplicity of the chart display, this response has been removed from the table.

## Recent works on properties built between 1940 – 1990

Q.30 Over the past 3 years, have you ever undertaken any of the following to a residence built or renovated between 1940 and 1990:



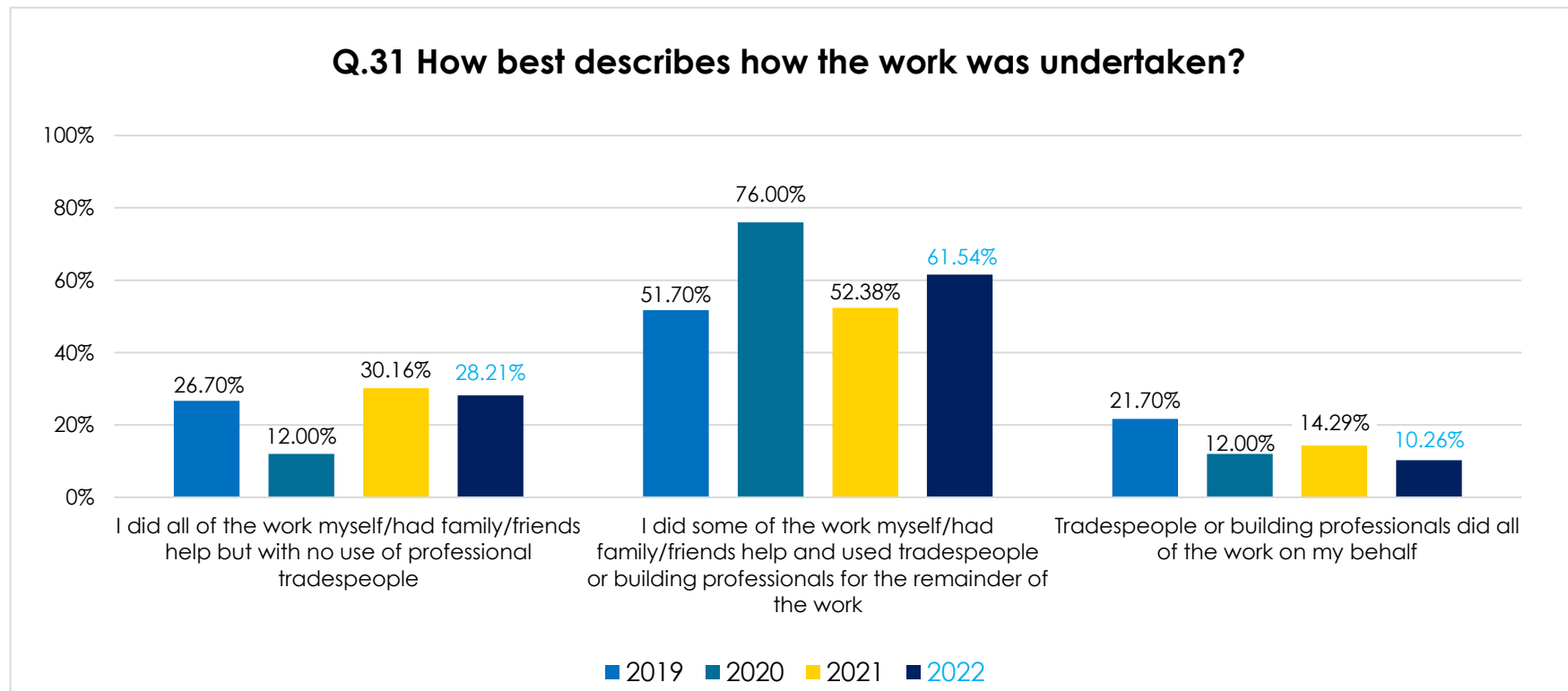
## Who did the work?

In 2022, more than one quarter (28%) of DIY home renovators said they did all of the work themselves without involving professional trades. Apart from a dip in 2020 as shown in Q31 below, this has not changed greatly since 2019.

In 2019, just over half (52%) reported that they did some of the work themselves or had family/friends help. This increased by almost 50% in 2020, which may have been due to the enforced Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in Victoria, with more

people staying at home and likely to undertake home renovation or improvement activities. It reverted closer to the 2019 figure in 2021, and this year has seen a jump to 61%.

Only one in ten (10%) engaged trade professionals for the entire works, which is less than half that did so in 2019. This highlights the ongoing popularity of DIY home renovation activities and the need to have ongoing asbestos awareness messaging.



## Assessment of risk of asbestos exposure

### Was an assessment undertaken?

For renovation of properties built between 1940 and 1990, 67% reported that an assessment for risk of asbestos exposure was undertaken. Almost one third (**31%**) said that no assessment was undertaken, which is almost identical to all previous survey results; 2019: **32%**, 2020: **33%**, 2021: **32%**.

As shown in Table 4, of the 67% who reported that an assessment had been undertaken, 58% had renovated kitchens, 58% bathrooms, 65% had knocked down either internal or external walls, and 50% had demolished external buildings.

Of those who renovated kitchens, a quarter of respondents did not assess the planned work to see if there was risk of asbestos exposure, nor one third of those who renovated bathrooms. As with previous surveys, it is concerning that so many DIY renovators did not check for asbestos in areas that are likely to contain asbestos before commencing works.

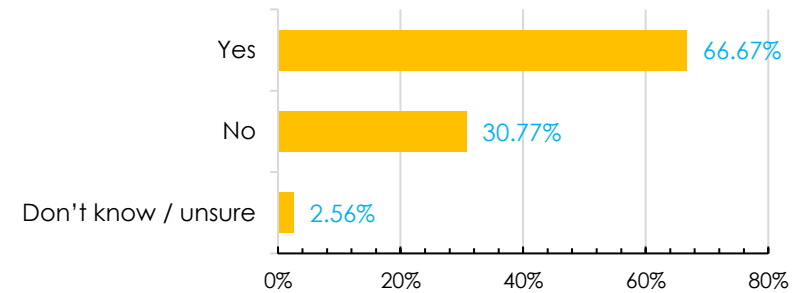


2021: **32%**  
2020: **27%**  
2019: **34%**

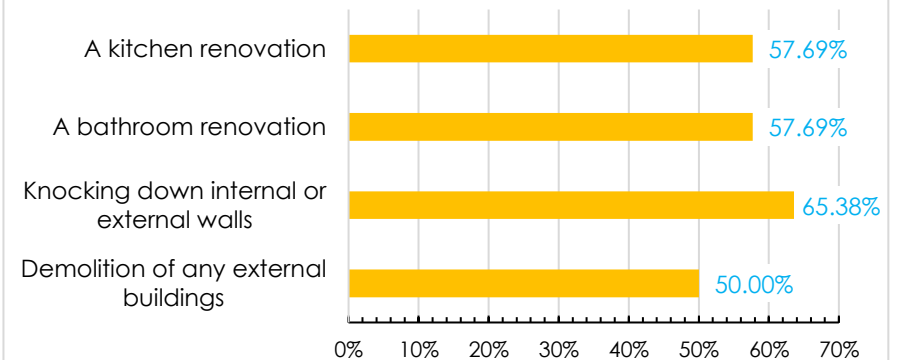


2021: **35%**  
2020: **22%**  
2019: **28%**

### Q32. Prior to undertaking any of the work, was any assessment of the planned work undertaken to determine the risk of exposure to asbestos? (n=39)



### Table 4. Areas in which assessments were undertaken to determine the risk of exposure to asbestos (n=26)



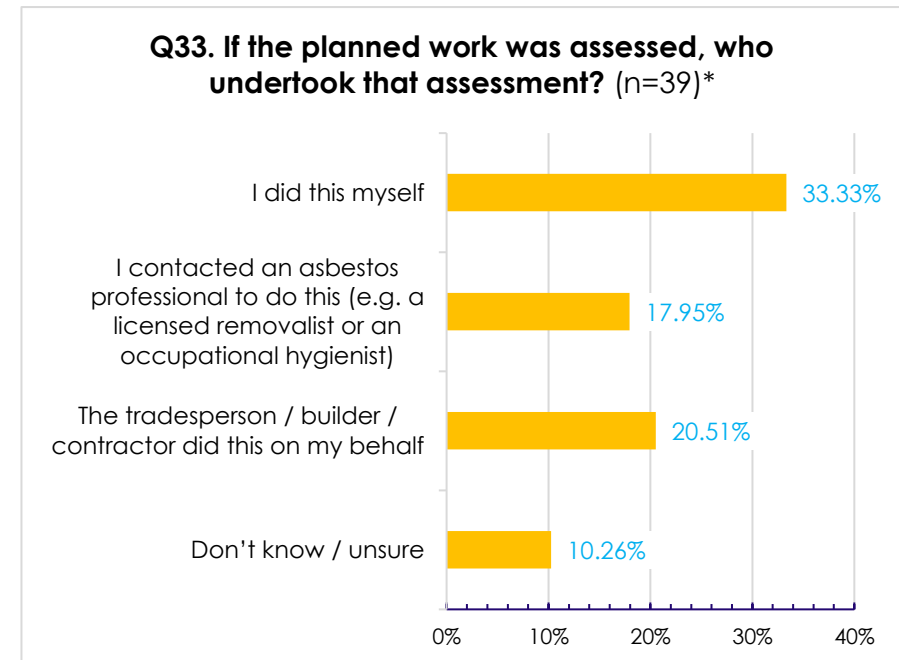
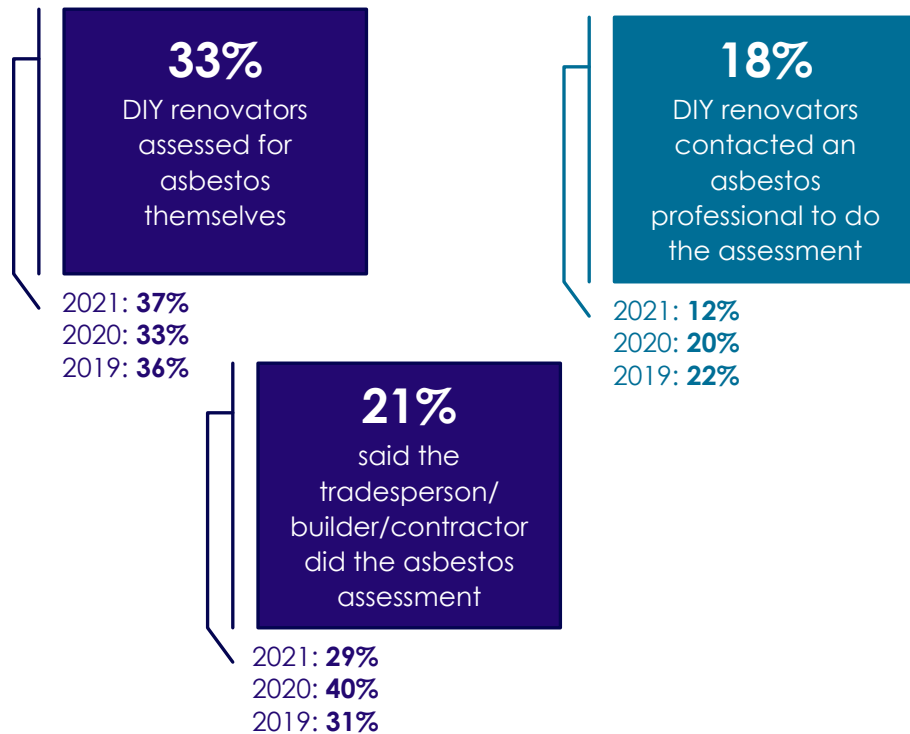
### Who did the assessment?

By removing the results for the "not applicable" response for Question 33, one third (**33%**) did the assessment for risk of exposure to asbestos themselves. There has been little change in this result since 2019: **36%**, 2020: **33%**, 2021: **37%**.

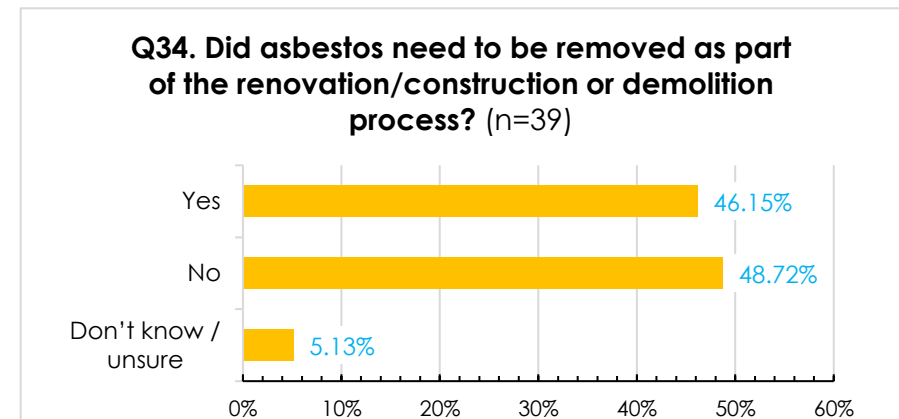
In 2019, 22% contacted an asbestos professional to undertake the asbestos assessment, which apart from the drop in 2021, has remained at around the same level, with 18% reporting in 2022.

### Was removal of asbestos required?

In this survey, almost half (46%) said asbestos was required to be removed, which is up from 30% in 2019.



\*The "not applicable" response has been removed from this table



## Removal and disposal of asbestos

### Who removed the asbestos?

In 2022, 39% of respondents said they removed the asbestos-containing materials themselves, which is more than a two-fold increase since 2019. This is concerning as only 14% of DIY home renovators have received formal training.

Of the 33% (n=13) of home renovators who performed their own asbestos assessment, 54% (n=7) decided it needed to be removed, and 57% (n=4) went on to remove it themselves.

Of the 39% who engaged an asbestos professional for the assessment, 71% subsequently engaged a licensed asbestos removalist to have the asbestos removed professionally.

Of those who engaged a tradesperson/builder/contractor to perform/manage the assessment, none of them subsequently engaged a licensed asbestos removalist.



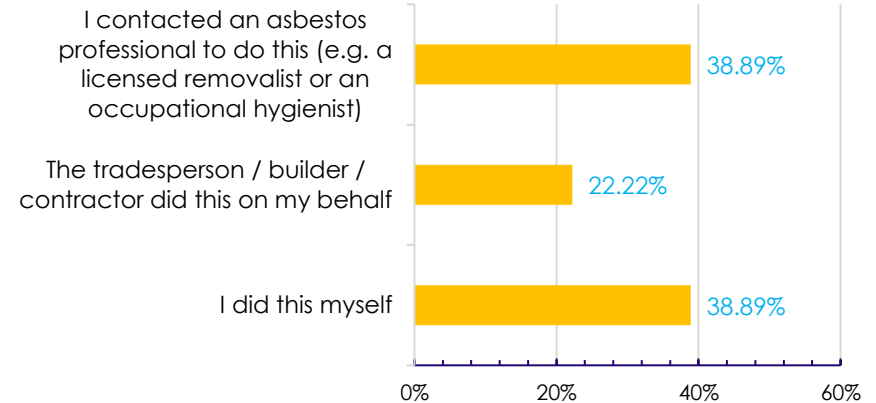
2021: **13.33%**  
2020: **33.33%**  
2019: **18.75%**



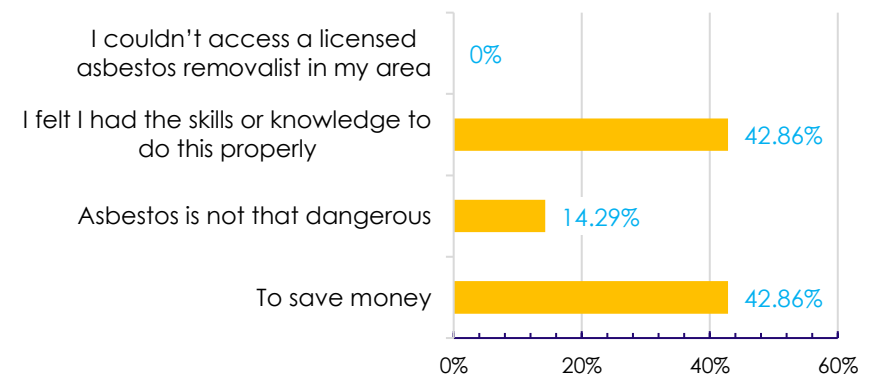
2021: **53.33%**  
2020: **55.56%**  
2019: **50.00%**

### Q35. Which of the following best describes how the asbestos was removed and disposed of?

(n=18)



### Q36. If you removed and disposed of the asbestos yourself, what was the main reason for doing this? (n=7)

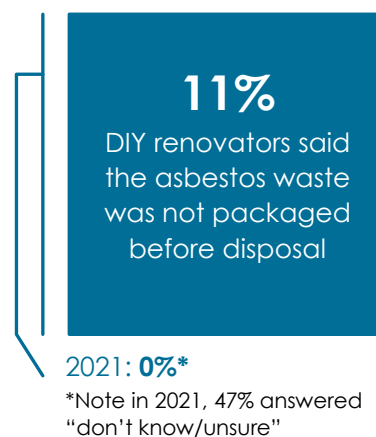
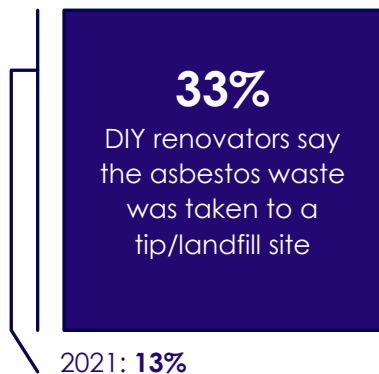
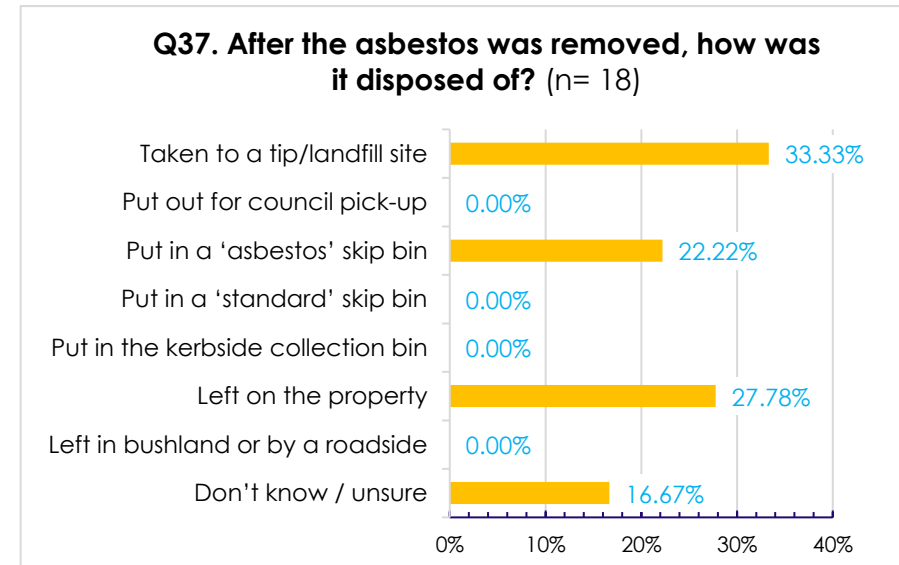


## How was the asbestos waste disposed of?

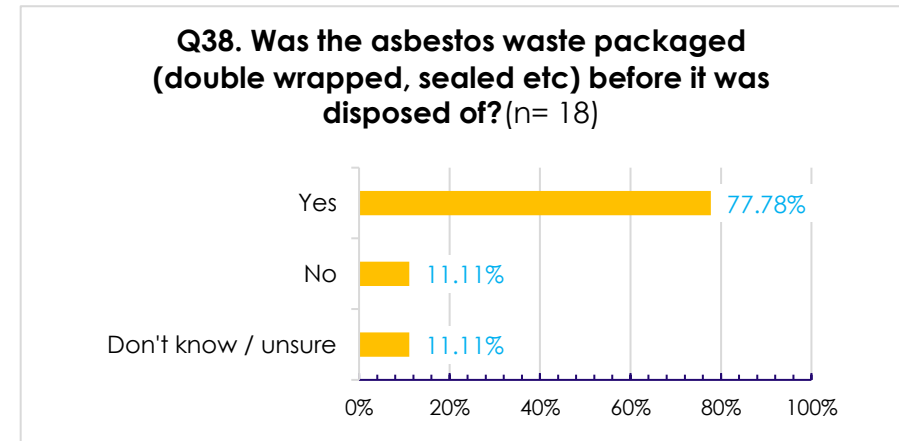
Questions 37 and 38 were first asked in 2021. Of the respondents who said that asbestos had to be removed:

- 33% reported the asbestos was taken to a landfill site (2021: 13%)
- 22% said it was put into an 'asbestos skip bin" (2021: 7%)
- 17% were unaware of what occurred after the asbestos was removed (2021: 33%)
- 28% reported that the removed asbestos was left on the property (2021: 28%).

78% reported that the asbestos waste was packaged/wrapped prior to disposal, which is up from 53% in 2022. It is concerning that 11% said the asbestos was not packaged/wrapped before disposal.



*The cost of disposal is so great it prevents people from disposing of it correctly. It should be free.*



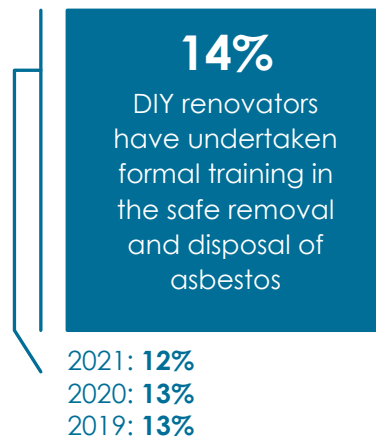
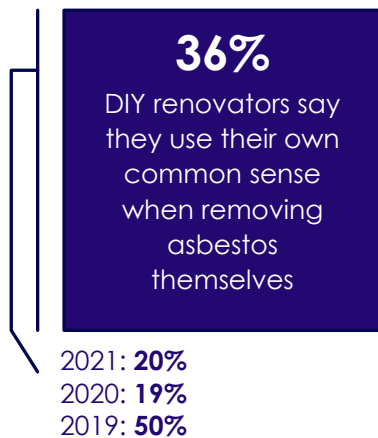
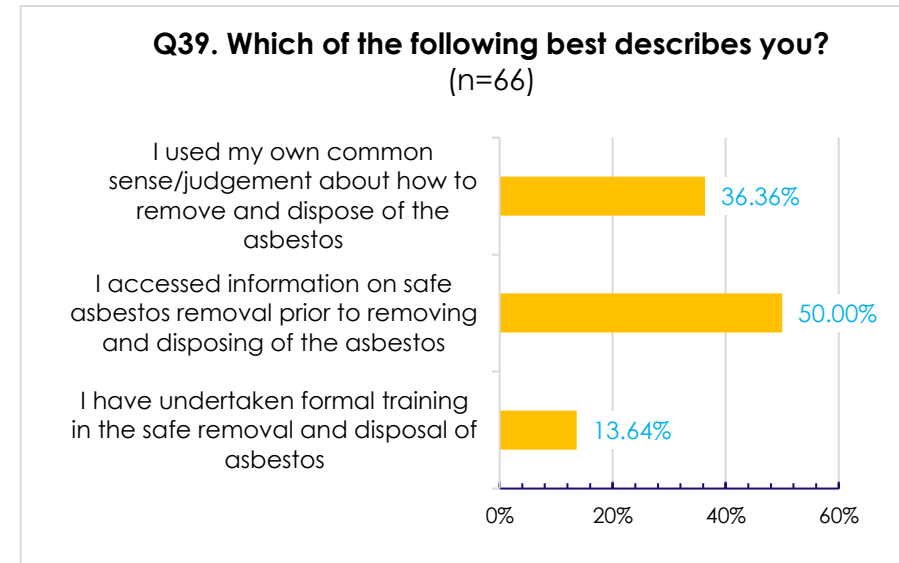


## DIY renovators asbestos awareness level

36% of DIY renovators in 2022 say they use their own common sense with regards to the removal and disposal of asbestos. The responses to this question have been varied, and even though the 2022 figure is higher than the 2021 and 2020 figures of 20% and 19%, it is still much lower than the 50% returned in the benchmark 2019 survey.

What has not changed is the ongoing concern of the returning small percentage of DIY home renovators who have undertaken formal training.

While the vast majority of DIY survey respondents (91%) say they take asbestos and its dangers very seriously as shown in Q41 (d) below, there is a significant concern about the gap between actual knowledge and perceived knowledge of asbestos and its related dangers .



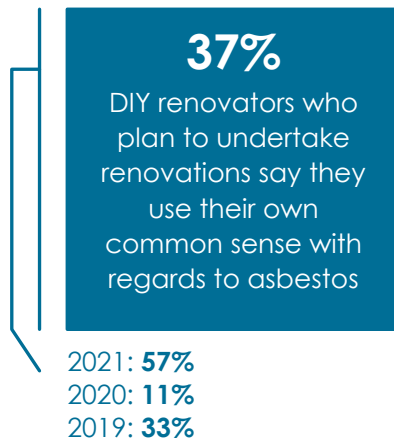
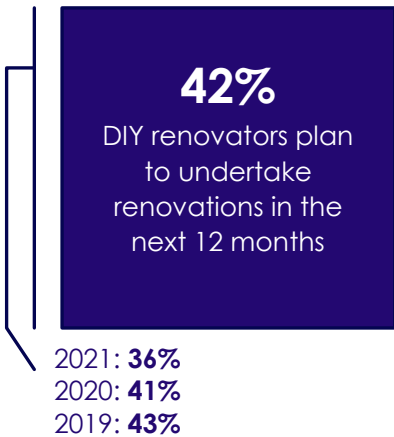
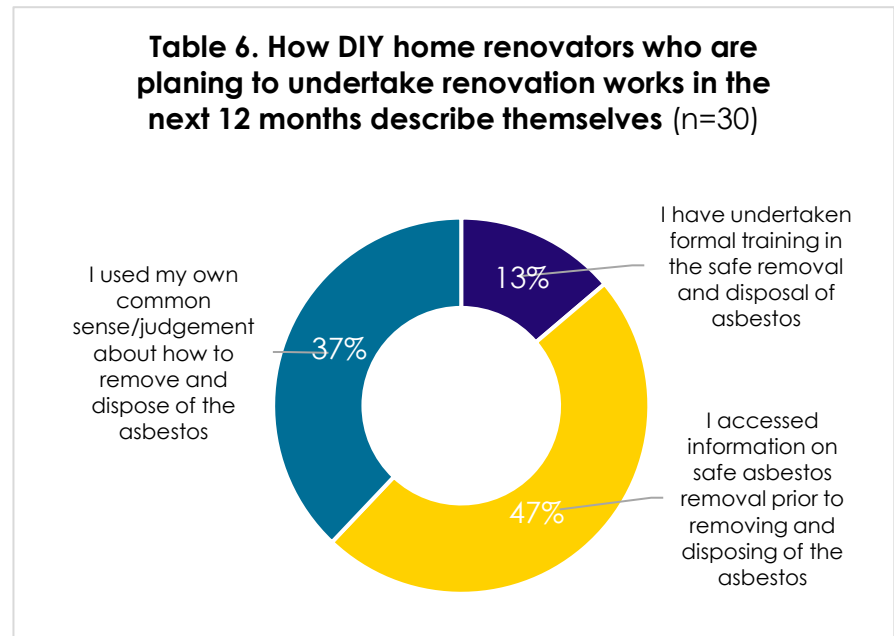
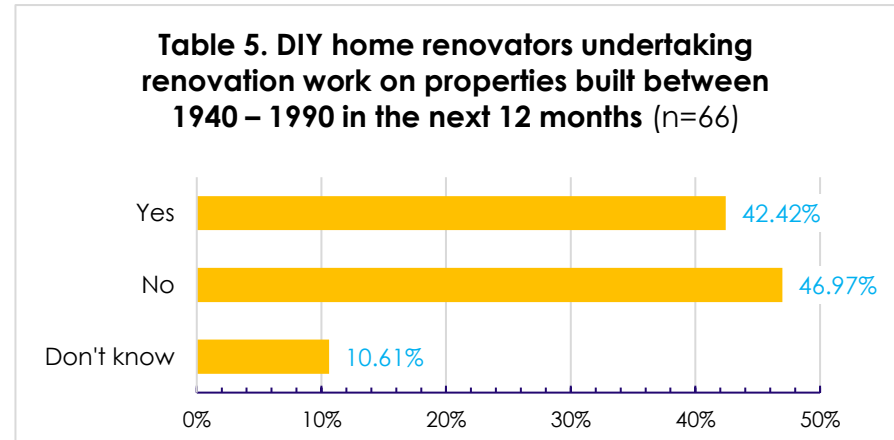
*[There is] limited information on how to limit exposure during clean up and packaging - e.g. having to break asbestos into a small enough piece to dispose of material at landfill. And how to clean up after renovations e.g dust, fibres, small pieces of material.*

## Future renovations

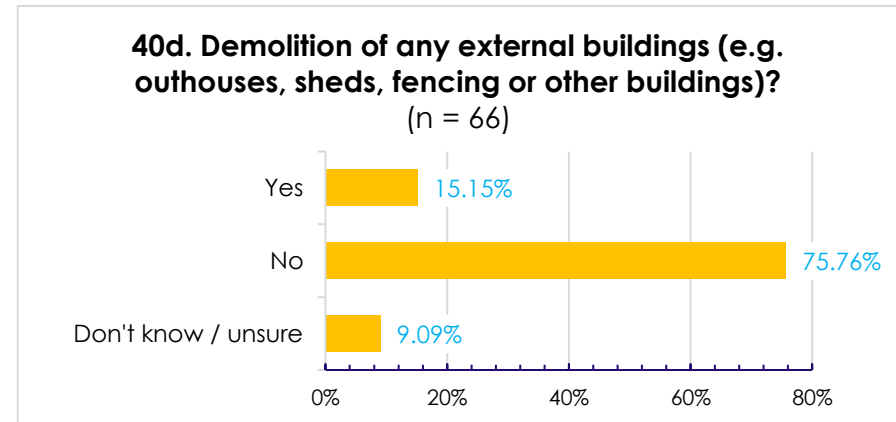
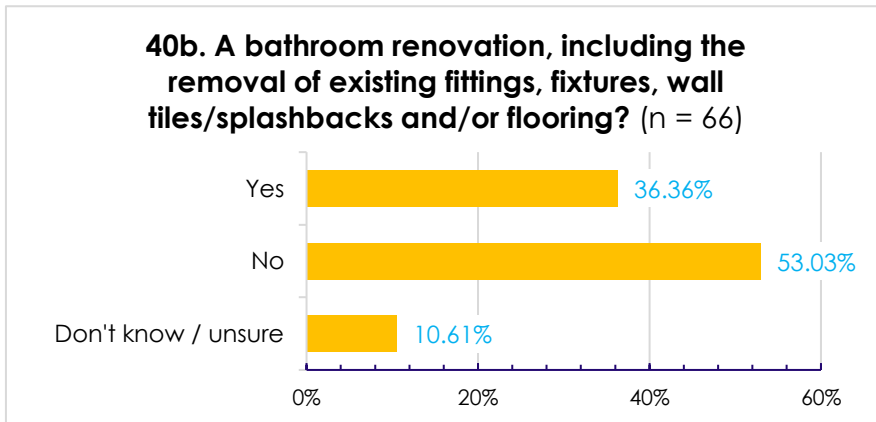
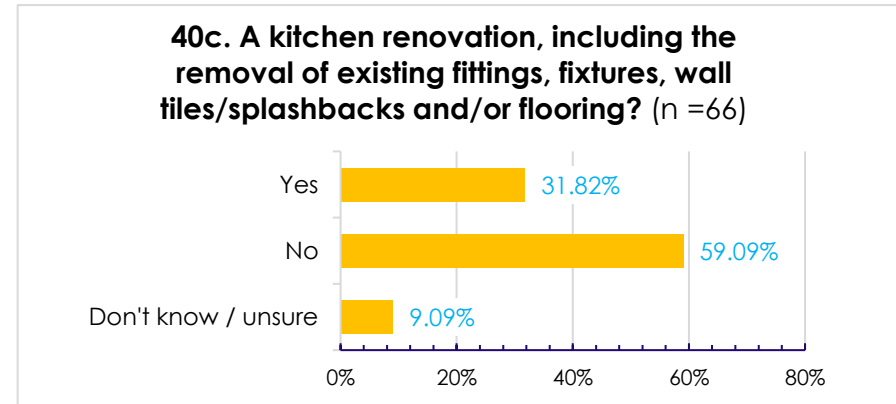
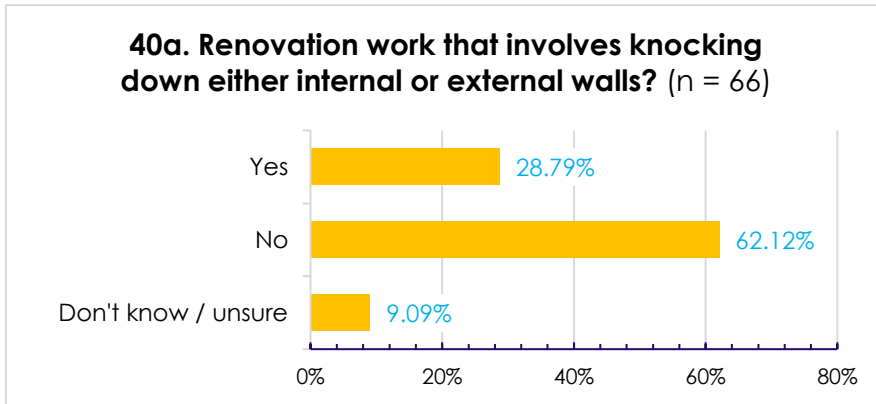
In each survey, more than one third of DIY home renovators reported that they were likely to do renovation work on properties built or renovated between 1940 – 1990 in the next 12 months.

One in five are planning to renovate a kitchen or bathroom, or knock down walls, and 15% plan to renovate buildings such as outhouses, sheds or fencing.

As shown in Table 6, of those who intend to undertake renovations, only 13% have had formal training, with 37% saying they use their own common sense and 47% saying they have accessed information about safe asbestos removal and disposal.



**Q40. Over the next 12 months, are you likely to undertake any of the following to a residence built or renovated between 1940 and 1990?**



## Attitudes towards asbestos

As shown in the charts on the next page, over 91% of home renovation respondents take asbestos and its dangers very seriously and 85% consider asbestos to be a key consideration when preparing to undertake a renovation.

73% say that they know how to protect themselves from exposure to asbestos, which is the same as 2021 yet lower than the 85% reported in 2020 and 78% in 2019.

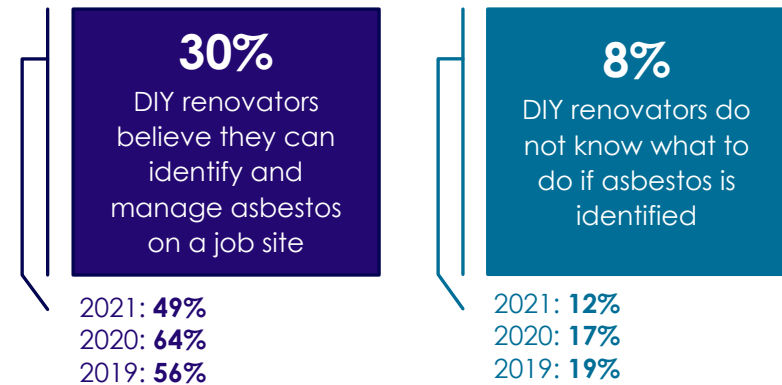
While 73% believe that they have enough information about asbestos to make informed decisions when doing renovations, 15% do not feel confident in this regard.

It is encouraging that a high number of home renovators take the dangers of asbestos seriously, however with only 14% having had formal training, there is a disconnect between perceived knowledge of how to assess/manage/remove asbestos and having actual knowledge in how to do this safely.

The responses reveal that the majority (71%) consider engaging a licensed professional to remove asbestos is the correct thing to do where asbestos is identified on their site.

With regards to identifying and managing asbestos on a job site, a steady decline has been observed since the initial benchmark survey in 2019. The 2022 survey showed three in ten (**30%**) believe they have sufficient knowledge to identify and manage asbestos themselves (2019: **56%**, 2020: **56%**, 2021: **49%**).

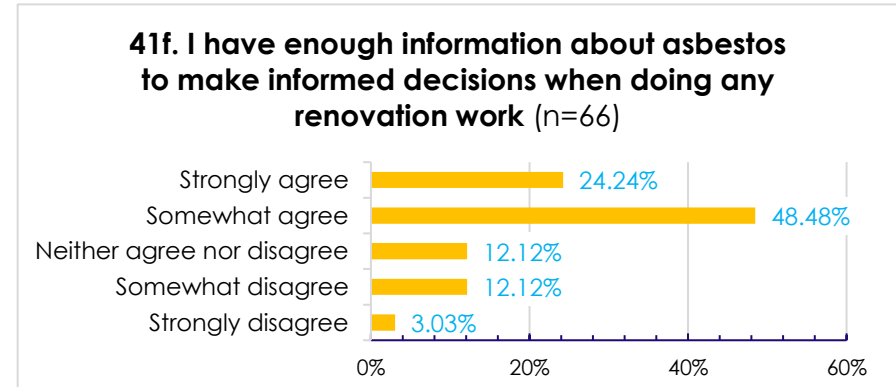
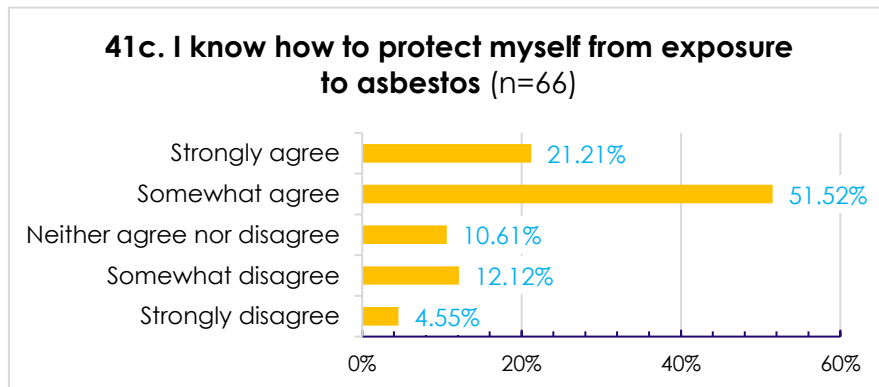
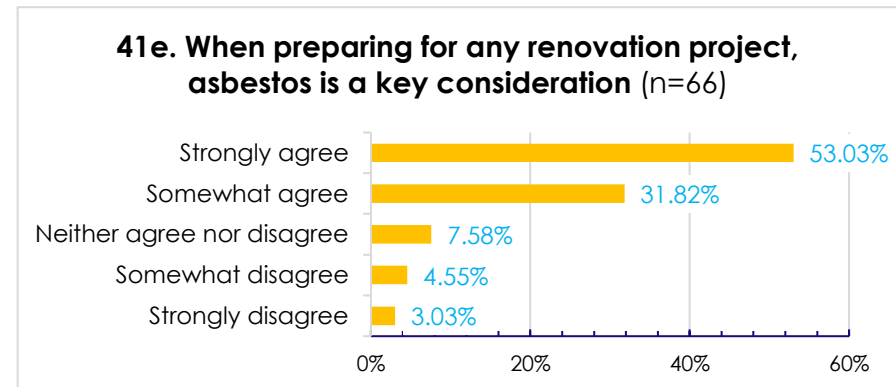
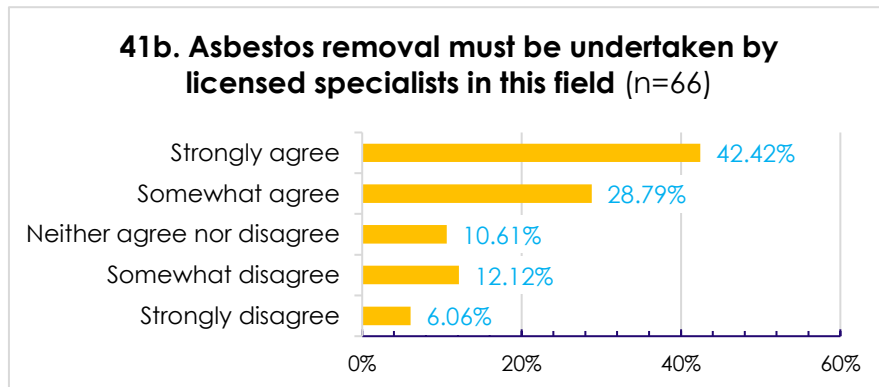
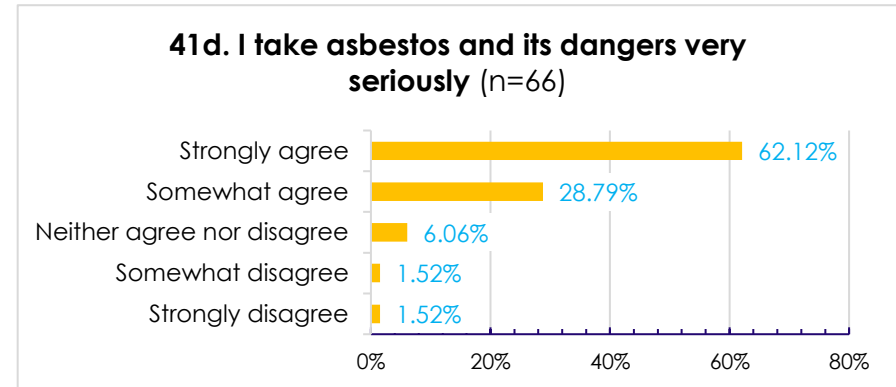
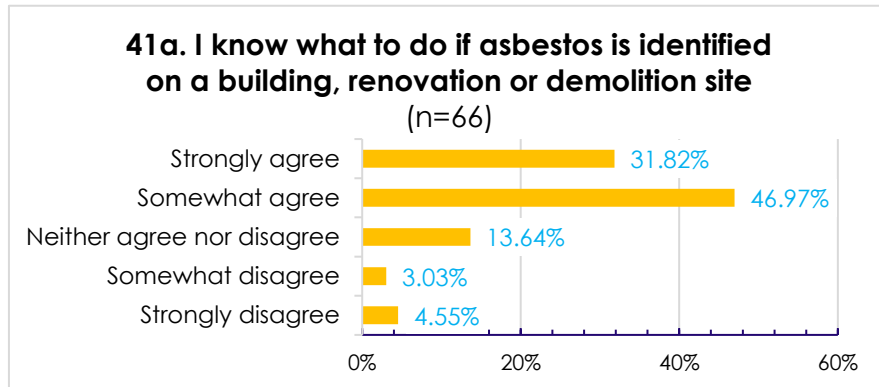
70% of respondents remain concerned about potentially being exposed to asbestos.



*Most people DIY due to financial constraints. I wonder about the community level cost benefit of health impact of illegally dumped asbestos and poorly handled asbestos versus some way of government subsidy in this area.*

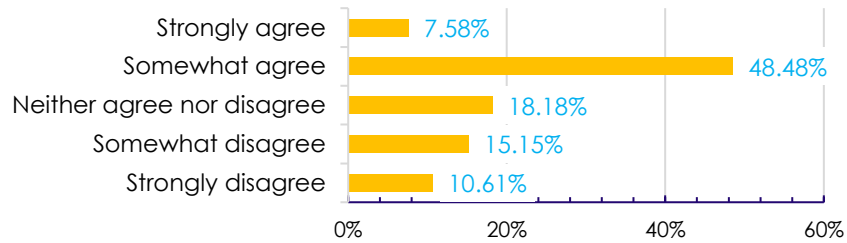
*There 100% should be more done on asbestos such as training for people who may work (on) it.*

**Q.41 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following:**



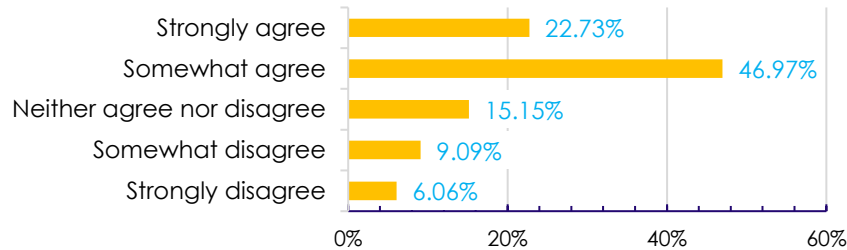
**41g. I have sufficient knowledge about how to identify and manage asbestos on the job site**

(n=66)

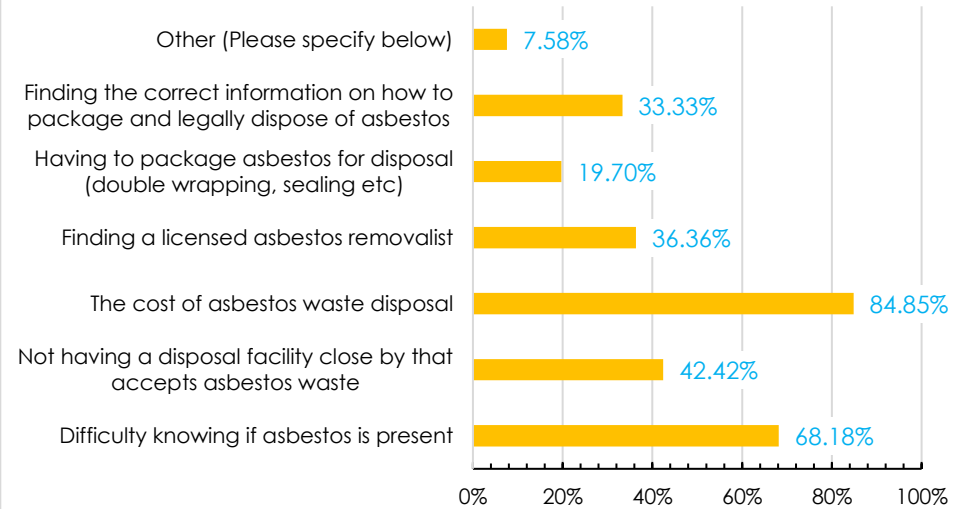


**41h. I am concerned about potentially being exposed to asbestos**

(n=66)



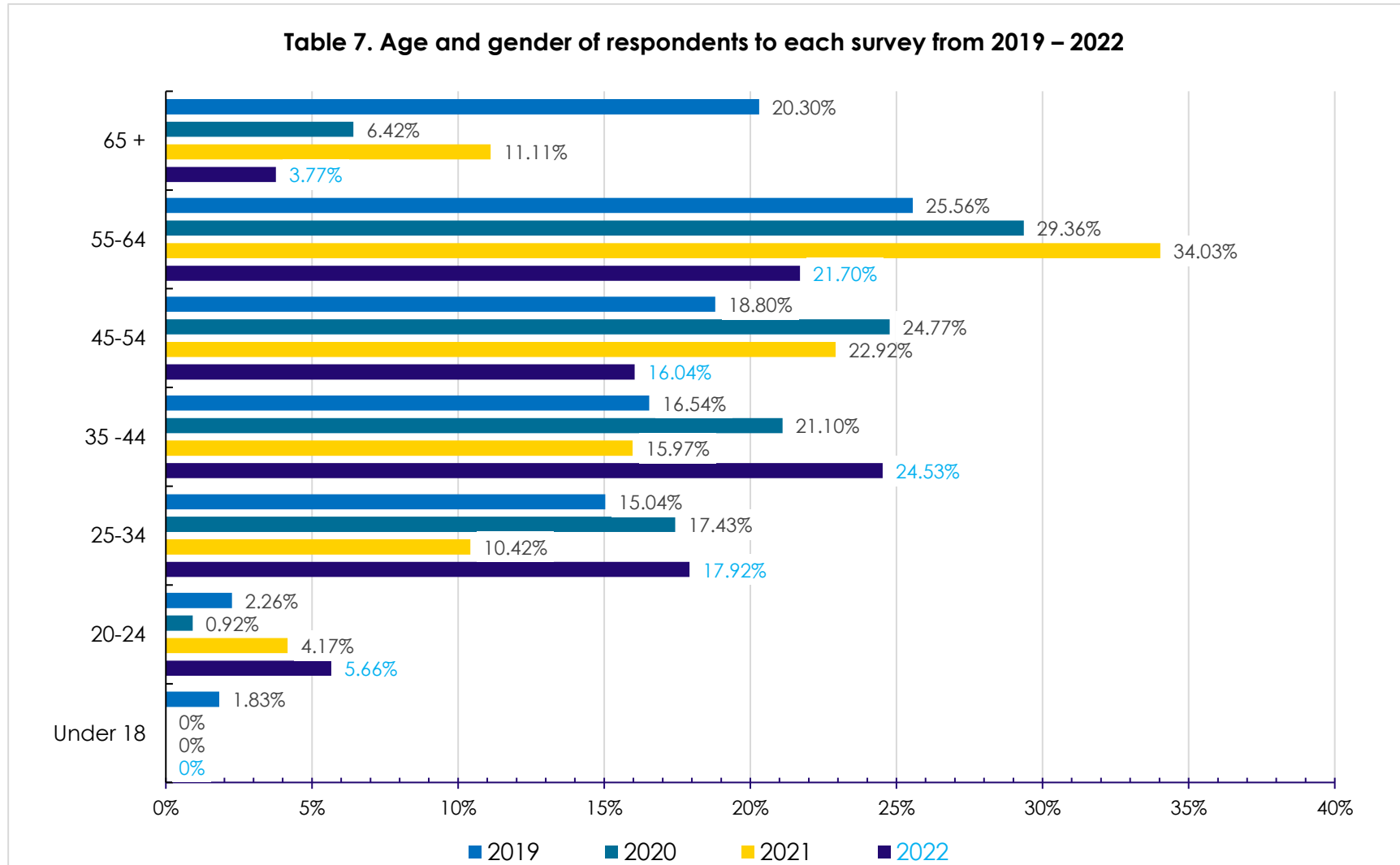
**Q42. Overall, which of these, if any, do you see as challenges householders face in disposing of asbestos waste? (n=66)\***



*Worried about long term disposal options for asbestos due to lack of landfills locally who are able to accept large quantities of asbestos. Need more local landfills.*

## DEMOGRAPHICS

As shown in Table 7 below, the demographics of the survey participants has changed each year.



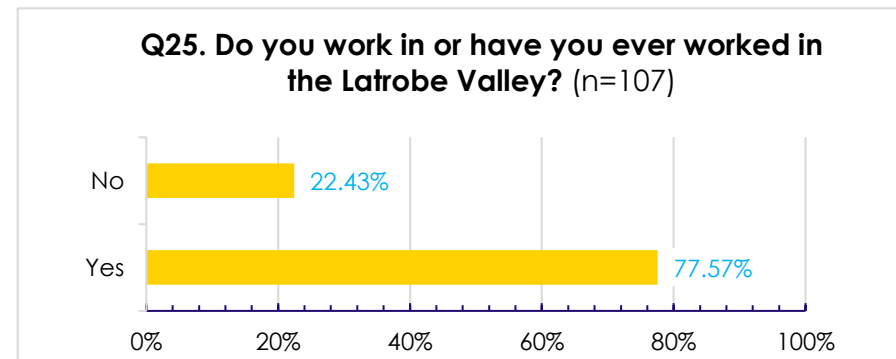
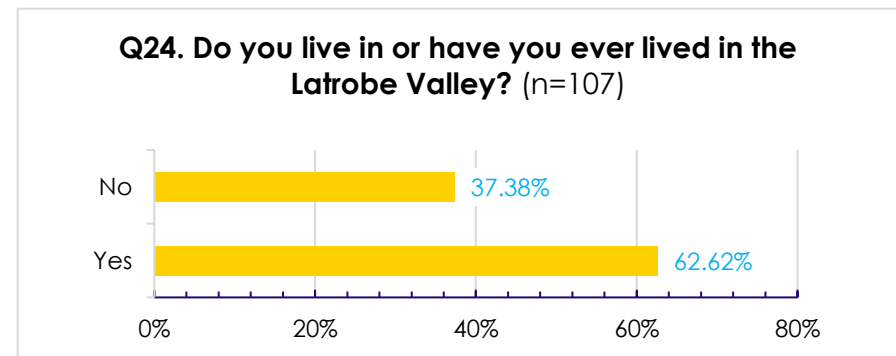
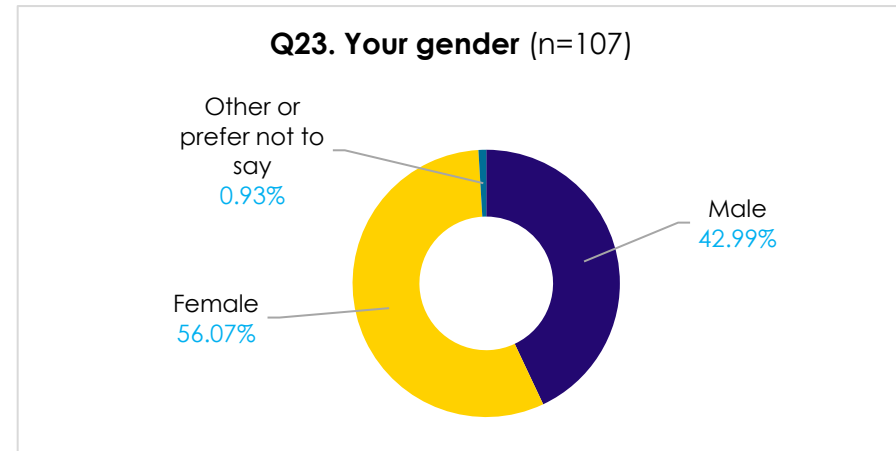
Of the 107 respondents to this year's survey, 21% said they had never either lived or worked in the Latrobe Valley. Female respondents outnumbered male respondents 56% to 43%. The largest group of respondents were aged between 25 to 44 (42%).

61% of respondents work in a government agency; this was up from the 2021 survey (44%). Private business and buildings and other trades were equal next at 6%.

One respondent identified as an apprentice. Nearly half (45%) of the respondents found out about the survey via email, followed by over one third of respondents via social media.

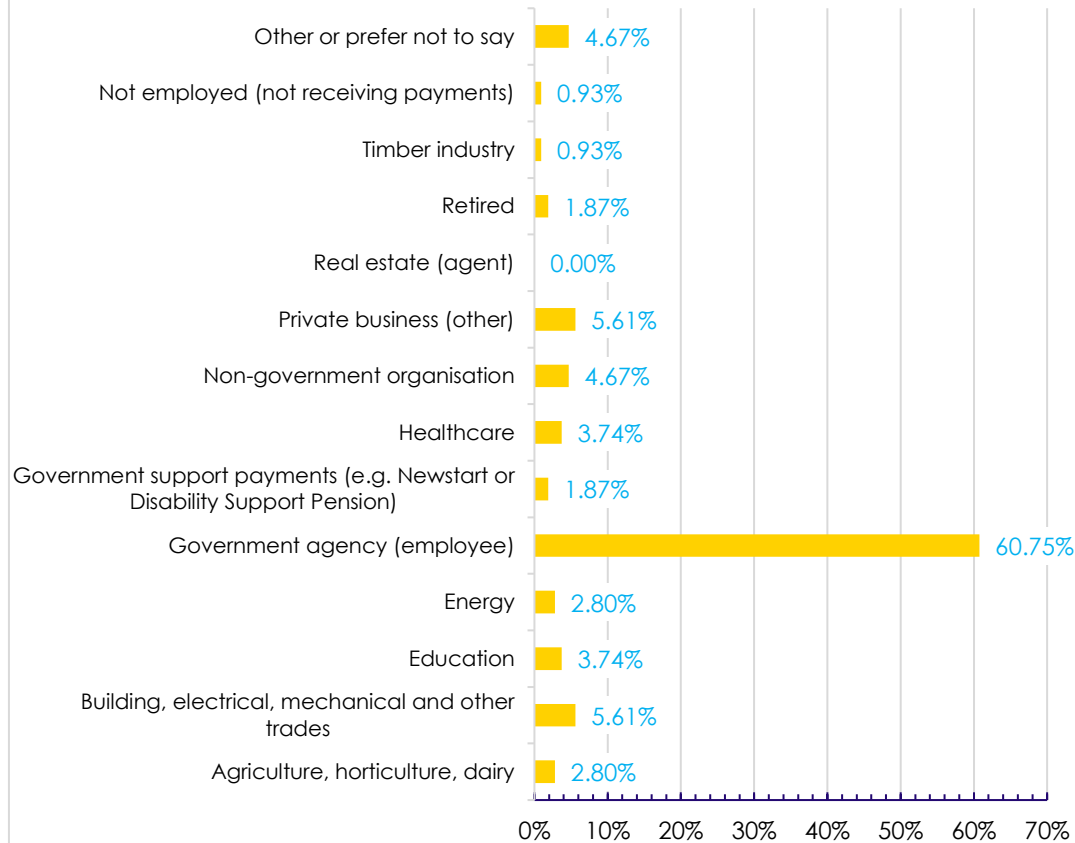


2021: **17%**  
2020: **14%**  
2019: **6%**

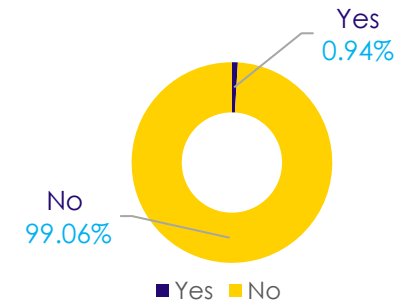




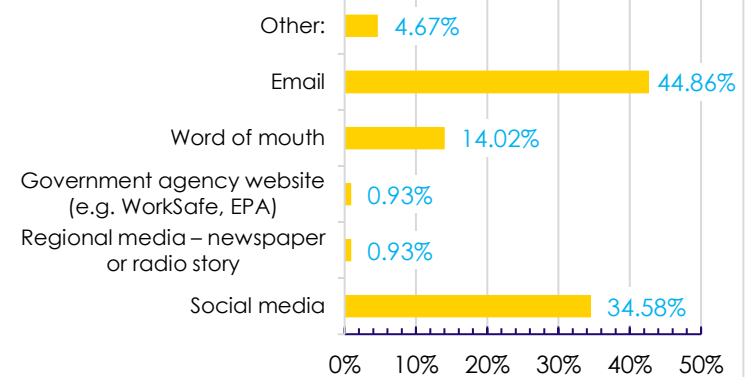
**Q26. What is your main source of income? (n = 107)**



**Q27. Are you an apprentice in the Latrobe Valley? (n=107)**



**Q28. How did you find out about this survey? (n = 107)**



## CONCLUSION

The health impacts of asbestos along with illegal dumping continue to be the highest-rated concerns of those surveyed.

Awareness of the general dangers of asbestos continues to be reported at a very high level, however the real risks of asbestos exposure for those doing home renovations are not broadly understood.

Asbestos was used in over 3,000 products and those who have undertaken training come to understand just how common it is and as a result are less confident in their own ability to identify products that may contain asbestos.

Only a small amount (14%) of home renovators had undertaken formal asbestos training, yet many feel confident in their knowledge of asbestos and its associated dangers.

As was found in all surveys, home renovation and improvement activities continue to be extremely popular, among both women and men. However what continues to be of concern is only one in ten (11%) homes built before 1990 are being checked by an asbestos professional prior to works being undertaken.

There has been no significant decrease in the confidence (33%) among home renovators that believe they can do their own asbestos assessments since 2019; strongly demonstrating that further awareness and education is needed.

Whilst more awareness is needed, campaigns produced by the Taskforce including informative social media messaging posts and *Breathtaking Renovations* has demonstrated that there has been an increase in the level of awareness and also a change in behaviour.

The trends that were originally identified in the 2019 benchmark study still apply: the need for increased education and awareness, more accessible and low-cost disposal options, and greater levels of regulation and compliance.

## Further comments from respondents

### Managing asbestos:

- “ “ The cost of removal, the government should be giving grants to remove it.
- “ “ Hard to know if an asbestos removalist is licensed and that asbestos waste is being taken to a lawful place.
- “ “ It's so everywhere, and sometimes in very small amounts that are tricky. Also, sometimes it can't be removed so even though its unsafe to be present at all, this might have to be lived with and managed.

### Housing:

- “ “ My entire house is made of it and so are all of my neighbours. I can't afford to remove it, there should be a grant to get rid of this from our houses, entire outside walls, bathroom and laundry are made of asbestos sheeting. It's not fair, we poor people have to deal with this.
- “ “ I need help to get it removed, can't afford it, no one can in Morwell, we are poor.

### Asbestos removal:

- “ “ Need more emphasis on DIY removal. More disposal sites only have one in Latrobe Valley.
- “ “ Disposal needs to be affordable. High costs drive inappropriate disposal.

### Asbestos exposure:

- “ “ We need the industries to stop putting apprentice tradespeople in these unsafe work environments without adequate personal protective equipment.

### Awareness/education:

- “ “ Need to inform community of dangers of removing asbestos roofing.
- “ “ There 100% should be more done on asbestos such as training for people who may work in it or have a required training for DELWP or further.
- “ “ LVAT is doing outstanding work in raising awareness of the presence and dangers of asbestos, and working collectively to resolve structural issues that contribute to poor handling leading to risks to health.
- “ “ I think asbestos is very dangerous especially to young people. The reach of the task force has not made it to the everyday person. It is too government department orientated, you need to get the local council to send information with our rates that resonates with the public.

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