

Risks associated with Mushroom Head Downpipes

Collapse Hazard

The collapse of fibre cement downpipes can pose a number of risks and hazards, particularly if persons are within close proximity. Serious injuries can and have occurred.

Reminder: Depending on their age and composition, fibre cement downpipes may contain asbestos.

Who has responsibility for managing the risks?

There is a joint responsibility for managing risk and preventing the collapse of mushroom head downpipes:

- The Department is responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.
- The Principal or their delegate is responsible for identifying, assessing, and controlling hazards in consultation with health and safety representatives and employees.
- Employees must exercise reasonable care for their own and others' health and safety.

What are schools to do?

To ensure the safety of students and staff, it is advisable to:

- Inspect the downpipes on a regular basis for signs of degradation such as cracks, corrosion, or water retention.
- If a mushroom head downpipe is identified in poor condition, notify your Regional Infrastructure Advisor.
- Regional Infrastructure Advisors will collaborate with Infrastructure Safety to conduct an inspection at the school and make recommendations to the school, region and Maintenance and Improvement team.

Further Information

A program is currently underway to remove free-standing rainwater pipes known as "mushroom head downpipes" from Queensland state educational facilities. If you need to discuss available options, please contact your local [Regional Infrastructure Services](#) team.

