

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Travelling to Wittenoom presents a public health risk from exposure to asbestos fibres which may result in contracting a fatal disease, such as mesothelioma, asbestosis or lung cancer.

Mesothelioma and lung cancer can develop after even brief exposure to asbestos. The time between the exposure to the asbestos and the occurrence of the cancer can be 20 to 50 years after exposure, or even longer.

Blue asbestos, the type once mined in Wittenoom, is the most deadly of all types of asbestos. Remnants of blue asbestos are still present in Wittenoom, posing a serious risk to your health.

Travellers are urged to find an alternate travel destination in the Pilbara region.

"Brian had lived in Wittenoom as a child...When Brian finally received his diagnosis, my worst nightmare became reality. He had pleural mesothelioma... We found it inconceivable that the disease was the result of Brian inhaling asbestos dust as a child and that it had lain dormant for forty-five years before becoming lethal.

We were still reeling from the shock when, without preamble, the young doctor gave his prognosis. His exact words were, "Three to nine months, I reckon".

Quote by Lorraine Kember www.lean-on-me.net

WARNING

Travelling to Wittenoom is not worth risking your life. The existence of tiny asbestos fibres on the ground and in the air which are a product of past asbestos mining present a deadly risk. Inhalation of fibres could be fatal and the diseases may not be apparent for extended periods of time. There are many destinations in the Pilbara that are beautiful, and not a risk to your health.

THE ALTERNATIVES

Karijini National Park

Karijini National Park is one of Western Australia's largest national parks and arguably one of the most spectacular. Unbeatable for adventure, the park is famous for its sheer gorges, waterfalls and cool swimming holes.

Tom Price

Nestled deep in the Hamersley Ranges, at the base of the beautiful Mt Nameless, is the town of Tom Price. Tom Price is a picturesque, modern and fully serviced town designed to blend into the natural environment and a centre for tourists during the warm, sunny winter months.

Nullagine & Marble Bar

With the discovery of gold in 1888, and later diamond and gem stones, Nullagine is unspoilt nature and is a must for the traveller seeking true four wheel adventure and off the beaten track wilderness. Stop in Marble Bar to visit the historic gold rush mining town and the Comet Mine.

For more information please visit www.wa.gov.au/wittenoom

 **Department of Local Government
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Considering Travelling to Wittenoom?

You should know the facts.
They could save your life.

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Clean Lung

HEALTH RISKS IN WITTENOOM

In 1978, the State Government began phasing down the former town of Wittenoom because of concerns over health risks from the presence of airborne asbestos fibres. A recent independent report on asbestos contamination in Wittenoom underlined the need to close Wittenoom immediately.

The report found that exposure to asbestos in the Wittenoom area, which has already resulted in several hundred deaths, continues to present a potential risk to the people that use the area.

This report was independently reviewed by the Department of Health and an independent contaminated sites auditor, who found that exposure and risk identified in the report presented an unacceptable public health risk.

Asbestos in Wittenoom

The asbestos mining operations in the Wittenoom area and the resulting remnants of asbestos have already resulted in several hundred fatalities among miners, residents and visitors to the town.

Asbestos was once considered valuable, but it has been discovered that if you inhale asbestos fibres, you have a chance of contracting fatal diseases such as mesothelioma, asbestosis and lung cancer. Asbestos was once used in building materials, paper and textile products, friction products such as brake linings for vehicles, but is no longer used for these purposes today.

Asbestos fibres still exist in the Wittenoom area, and even brief exposure poses a risk to people visiting the area. The fibres move by wind and water, and also by human activities such as vehicles spreading particles.

DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH ASBESTOS

Mesothelioma

Mesothelioma is a cancer of the outer lining of the lungs, abdomen or heart. In time, cancer cells may multiply, forming a tumour that can destroy your vital organs.

The cancer can develop after even brief exposure. The time between exposure to asbestos and the occurrence of mesothelioma can be as long as 20 to 40 years, or longer.

Asbestosis

Asbestosis is a chronic lung disease contracted by inhalation of asbestos fibres. You will experience shortness of breath, and the risk of contracting deadly lung diseases such as lung cancer and mesothelioma is increased.

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is tumour of the lung tissue. It is capable of invading surrounding tissues, and spreading to other parts of your body.

The time between exposure to asbestos and the occurrence of lung cancer can be as long as 20 to 50 years.



Lung with Mesothelioma