

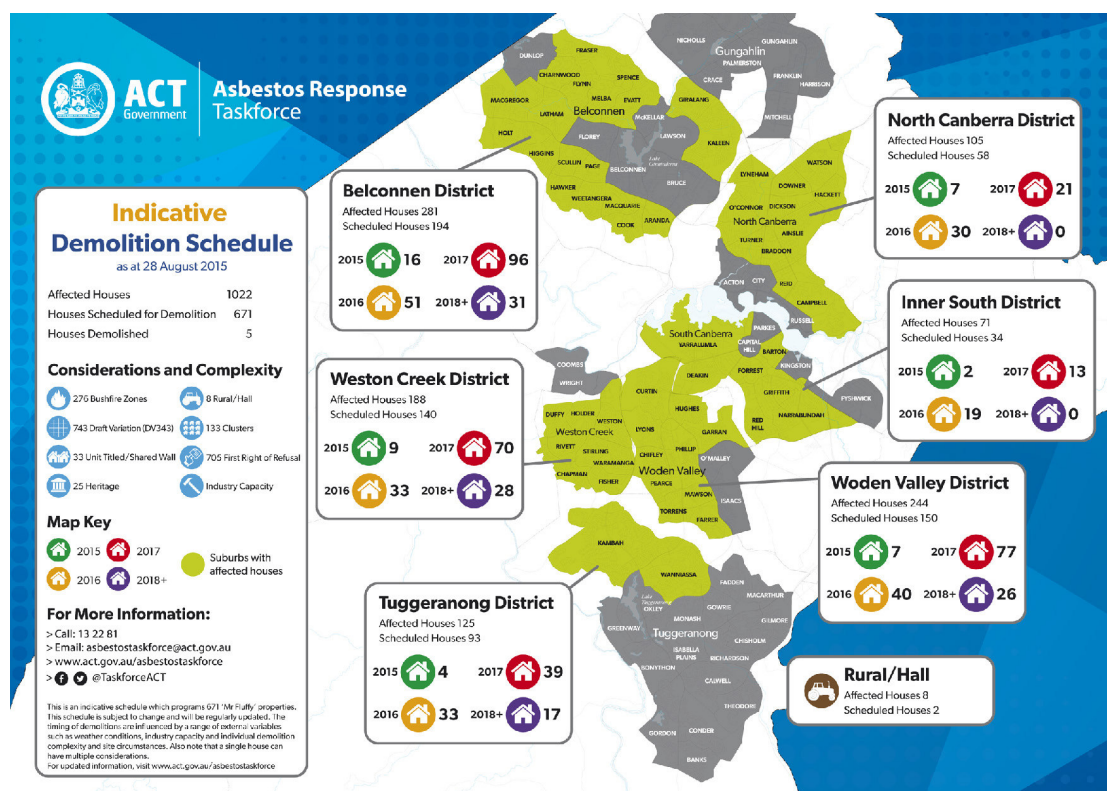
Canberra Mr Fluffy asbestos: a suburb-by-suburb guide to the demolitions

The Canberra Times September 1, 2015 [Emma Macdonald](#)

The face of 56 of Canberra's most established suburbs is set to change dramatically with the ACT Asbestos Response Taskforce unveiling its demolition schedule for 671 Mr Fluffy homes over the next three years.

2017 will be the peak year for demolitions with 316 homes slated to come down across the ACT – 96 of them in Belconnen.

The taskforce has committed itself to removing 45 homes by the end of this year, 206 in 2016, and 102 in 2018. No timeframe has yet been given to two rural properties.



Meanwhile, as more of the ACT's 1022 Mr Fluffy are surrendered to the ACT Government under the buy-back scheme, they would be fitted into the existing schedule so that at least 850 Mr Fluffy homes were razed by 2018.

There would be some respite from demolition works in 2019 before another flurry of demolitions was required after 2020 – the deadline the ACT Government has set for homeowners wishing to be part of the buy back and demolition scheme.

Tenders will close today (Tuesday 1 September) for interstate demolition companies to bid for the fixed price contracts with work to begin in October. The cost of demolishing each home – including the costs of securing and maintaining it between buying it and knocking it down - has been set at around \$160,000.

Taskforce Head Andrew Kefford said the "indicative demolition schedule is deliberately ambitious but realistic."

He said the schedule had had to balance a lot of competing interests in terms of deciding which homes would come down when.

Some priority had been given to homes within bushfire zones, of which there are 276,

and some priority had also been given to homeowners who had indicated they wanted to buy back their land and rebuild.

Mr Kefford said it had been an intricate balancing act in devising the schedule.

While 705 homeowners had initially indicated they wished to have first right of repurchasing their blocks, Mr Kefford noted that a smaller number had indicated a strong preference to keep their land. Of the 697 properties surrendered to the ACT Government more than 450 owners had already exercised their stamp duty concession in purchasing another property in the ACT.

Other complicating factors impacting on the schedule included 743 houses being subject to draft variation 343 – regarding the potential for the building of unit-titled dual occupancy on these blocks of land after the homes are removed.

A further 33 were already unit titled or shared a wall, while 25 homes were heritage listed and would require time to be documented before they were demolished.

Mr Kefford noted that 133 clusters of Mr Fluffy homes occurred across the suburbs and this would impact on how they were demolished.

"Obviously those houses where people who have expressed a first right of refusal we are very keen to make blocks available for them as soon as we can."

"(But) one of the things we have to take into account is that if we focus on any one criteria we end up with an answer that doesn't meet those key instructions the government has given us."

These were to remove the houses safely, quickly and cost-efficiently while keeping community disruption to a minimum.

Mr Kefford noted that would be difficult in street of suburbs where Mr Fluffy homes are clustered.

He said these streets would need to be managed carefully so that the efficiencies of job-lot demolitions did not create disruption for existing residents. The Taskforce would also continue to work closely with residents in those areas.

Homeowners would be informed this week of their place in the schedule – within a six-month window. Neighbours would be given at least one month's notice before homes came down.

Valuations of blocks of land would be given to owners within their six-month window based on current day values decided by the Land Development Agency.

Mr Kefford said wider commercial interests of land values would also play into the demolition schedule so certain suburbs did not have an excess of blocks of land coming onto the market at any one time – creating a glut.

He also noted that each of the 850 planned demolitions could also be influenced by a range of factors, from the weather, industry capacity, and site features. The Taskforce would update the schedule regularly as a result.