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**SAFE AS HOUSES: NORTHERN RIVERS DEMOLITION & ASBESTOS CHOOSES ISUZU**

Australia has one of the highest volumes of asbestos used in building materials globally. Until the 1990s, asbestos was a common component in everything from concrete and walls to roofing, ceilings, and insulation. It is estimated that [one in three Australian homes](https://www.insidewaste.com.au/111322-2-asbestos/) still contain asbestos.

Although the manufacture of asbestos products was banned in the 1980s it was legally allowed to be used as a building product until as recent as 2003.

When disturbed during renovations, demolition, or even due to weather events like storms or hail, asbestos can pose serious health risks. Anyone handling asbestos needs specialised training and the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure safety.

One company addressing this challenge is [Northern Rivers Demolition & Asbestos](https://northernriversdemolition.com.au/), led by Managing Director Samuel Northfield.

Since its launch in 2016 in Ballina, New South Wales, the business has provided a safe, high-quality service removing asbestos and demolishing buildings, growing to encompass a waste and recycling facility in Lismore as well as a skip bin service designed for transporting asbestos safely to disposal sites.

“We specialise in asbestos removal, demolition, and recycling in both residential and commercial situations,” said Samuel.

“Whether it's an asbestos removal job or a large-scale demolition project, my role is to keep the cogs turning in all the different aspects of the business.”

**Decontamination station**

What began as a small-scale asbestos removal service has steadily expanded over the years. Samuel recognised the local demand and obtained the necessary licences to meet it, first starting with a medium-duty truck and gradually growing his fleet.

He noted that the demand for asbestos removal is at an all-time high, particularly due to the demolition of older buildings throughout New South Wales.

Samuel’s 15-person team uses advanced safety equipment, including respirators and HEPA H-Class asbestos vacuums, all while following a strict code of practice.

Projects involving [asbestos removal](https://northernriversdemolition.com.au/asbestos-removal/) typically follow a multi-stage process, including assessment, removal, decontamination, and final clearance inspections.

For example, when a customer wants to renovate a home containing asbestos, Samuel’s strip-out team comes in to remove the asbestos and complete the decontamination. The company also handles soil remediation and demolition projects.

Recent jobs include demolishing the Cedar Park caravan park in Ballina, Sedgers Reef Hotel in Iluka, and other commercial buildings in the Northern Rivers region.

**Tackling things safely**

One of the biggest challenges in the asbestos removal industry is finding safe, licenced disposal facilities. In the Northern Rivers region, there are limited options for safe disposal and strict [EPA guidelines](https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/waste/industrial-waste/asbestos-waste) on how it must be handled.

To solve this problem, Samuel turned to [Isuzu Trucks](https://www.isuzu.com.au/) for a heavyweight transport solution, which could take sealed asbestos over the border to disposal facilities in Ipswich, Yatala, and Staplyton disposal facilities in [Queensland](https://www.asbestos.qld.gov.au/).

Northern Rivers collected an [Isuzu FYJ 300-350 8x4 Auto](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/fy-series/), featuring a manufacturer’s GVM of 30,000 kg and equipped with a [Palfinger crane](https://www.palfinger.com.au/) hook lift to manage their 30-cubic-square-metre skip bins.

With a high-torque 6UZ1-TCC engine—which offers a maximum power output of 257 kW @ 2,000 rpm and 1,422 Nm of torque @ 1,400 rpm—plus twin-steer axles and load-sharing front suspension, the FYJ is smartly specified for these types of heavy, relentless duties.

The size of the skip bin means Samuel and his team can continue loading the bin with safely sealed asbestos at multiple sites before making the trek over the border.

“We can load up the skip bin over several days, sealing it each afternoon and continuing the next day.

“Once it's full, we can head straight to Queensland for disposal,” explained Samuel.

“Access to affordable, licenced disposal facilities is a major issue in our industry at the moment, so the Isuzu FYJ is our solution to this problem.”

**A growing fleet**

The company’s fleet now includes four Isuzu trucks: the FYJ 300-350 Auto, an [NMR 60/45-150 Tipper](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/ready-to-work/), an [NPR 45/55-155 Tipper](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/ready-to-work/tipper/), and an [NLR 45-150 Traypack](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/ready-to-work/traypack/).

Samuel even flew to South Australia to collect the FYJ 300-350 from [Northeast Isuzu](https://www.neisuzu.com.au/?_gl=1*18fjhwq*_gcl_au*NjAzMDI0MDExLjE3MzMwOTIzNDQ.&_ga=2.193609837.1307430967.1737333749-143571600.1717472590) and drove it nearly 3,000 km back home to Ballina.

“The FYJ is comfortable and easy to drive, especially compared to other truck brands.

“The cab’s standardisation makes it feel similar to driving one of our smaller Isuzu Tippers,” he added.

The FYJ’s heavy-duty Allison 4430 automatic transmission ensures smooth shifting, reducing driver fatigue during long journeys into Southeast Queensland, which can exceed 200 km one way.

Samuel chose the Allison transmission to help minimise distractions and make travel as effortless as possible for his hardworking team.

**Sustainability & expansion**

[Northern Rivers Isuzu](https://www.northernriversisuzu.com.au/) provides excellent support, with Samuel praising the customer service from Isuzu Sales Manager Jake Everett, who ensures that any urgent repairs or parts replacements are handled promptly.

“Jake always makes sure to minimise downtime, which can really impact us.

“If we need a part for our truck with short notice or a quick turnaround on service, he will get it done ASAP.”

Ongoing support from the dealership will be appreciated as this demolition business continues to thrive and diversify, such as their recently opened Northern Rivers Recycled Building Materials.

This is where salvaged materials from demolition projects, like hardwood timber, are processed, sorted, and sold as a new product rather than sent to landfill.

Samuel is also expanding his services with Northern Rivers Bulk Bins & Haulage, offering safe asbestos transportation services for other companies. To support this growth, the team is considering adding another heavy-duty Isuzu truck to the mix.

“With Isuzu Trucks, you don't have to worry about anything—if you take care of your truck, it will take care of you,” Samuel said.

“Business owners have already got enough to juggle, so Isuzu’s reputation for reliability gives us peace of mind, letting us get on with the job at hand.”

**ends**

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