

Businesses ordered to stop work with engineered stone after failing safety inspections

- HSE serves first Prohibition Notices as part of nationwide health and safety inspection campaign
- Enforcement action taken to protect workers from deadly silica dust
- Four companies ordered to stop work after visits from HSE inspectors
- It comes after guidance issued telling industry to stop dry-cutting engineered stone

Four companies have been ordered to stop working with engineered stone as part of a crackdown to protect workers from deadly dust.

The companies received prohibition notices (PNs) following visits by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors. The notices are enforcement actions that require the businesses to stop the work immediately and take steps to improve safety. Each of the firms was found to have had a lack of control measures in place to keep employees safe while working with engineered stone.

HSE launched a package of measures last month to protect workers from the dangers of engineered stone dust. It followed concern about the deaths of young workers from silicosis – a deadly-but-preventable lung disease caused by breathing in respirable crystalline silica (RCS). A nationwide inspection campaign was launched to run through 2026, and inspections have resulted in these four enforcement notices being served as of the end of May.

HSE enforcement notices are published approximately five weeks after they are served to account for the appeals process and internal quality assurance.

Publication of new [guidance](#) from HSE made it clear that dry cutting of engineered stone is unacceptable, and the regulator plans to conduct more than 1,000 visits at which enforcement action to be taken against those failing to meet the required standards.

Harvey Wild, Head of Operations at the Health and Safety Executive, said: “Our inspectors are visiting businesses across Great Britain to ensure that employers have implemented the correct controls to keep their employees safe.

“We have stopped dangerous work with engineered stone in four workplaces due to serious failures in providing the correct controls.

“Silicosis is incurable, but it is entirely preventable. No worker should lose their life to a lung disease caused by their job, and that is why we have taken this action. If businesses ensure the right controls are being used correctly, then the risks of engineered stone and silicosis can be safely managed. Where these are not in place, workers will be at risk.”

Minister for Social Security and Disability Sir Stephen Timms said:

“Every worker deserves to come home safe, without fear of losing their life to a preventable, deadly lung disease caused by their job.

“The enforcement action taken by HSE sends a clear message that putting workers at risk of silicosis – an entirely preventable but devastating disease – is completely unacceptable and there will be consequences.

“I urge all businesses working with engineered stone to follow HSE’s guidance now. There is no excuse for exposing workers to unnecessary risk.”

The dangers of engineered stone include silicosis, a deadly-but-preventable lung disease caused by breathing in silica dust that is released when stone is being processed. HSE’s research found that dry fabrication typically results in exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) five to ten times higher than wet methods for processing products. It also found that lower-content silica engineered stone is available at the same quality, meaning businesses can switch to less dangerous products.

This evidence led to HSE acting decisively to ensure those controls become universal across the industry, and to provide clarity to businesses and workers, HSE has published its first-ever COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) [guidance sheet](#) specifically for engineered stone.

HSE’s guidance sets out in plain English what employers must do: switch to engineered stone with a low silica content; use on-tool water suppression, control mist; provide appropriate respiratory protective equipment (RPE); and carry out regular health surveillance.

□HSE’s first instances of enforcement action also addressed a range of other failures including Health Surveillance; provision of suitable respiratory protective equipment (RPE); provision of suitable local exhaust ventilation; and machinery guarding.

To support dutyholders HSE provides a range of advice and information for fabricators, installers, and distributors of engineered stone – including managers and supervisors. Visit [Working engineered stone: Control silica risk – HSE](#)

Further Information:

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety.
- HSE’s new guidance for engineered stone outlines the controls that should be in place when working with the material, which effectively rules out dry-cutting, grinding and polishing, unless businesses can demonstrate an equally effective or better control is in place. This is not a new law, or a formal prohibition as would be achieved with changes to legislation.
- The new [COSHH guidance for engineered stone](#) is available at [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
- Respirable crystalline silica (RCS) dust is invisible to the naked eye

and can penetrate deep into the lungs, causing silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and lung cancer.

- HSE's 1,000+ inspection programme will run through the 2026/27 period.
- HSE is also working with manufacturers, suppliers and importers to encourage the supply of lower-silica engineered stone products, which research indicates are a viable alternative to high-silica materials. Manufacturers have a legal duty under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to provide adequate information about the risks associated with their products and the controls required to work with them safely.
- Further details on the latest HSE news releases are available at [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk).
- Further details on the latest HSE notices are available at [Public register of enforcement notices](#).
- To account for the appeals process and internal quality assurance, enforcement notices are published approximately 5 weeks after they are served.

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Industry and government set new bar for workplace health

A new framework has been launched to raise the standards of physical and mental health at work, within the chemicals and major hazards industries.

The new Principles of Workplace Health and Wellbeing Leadership have been officially launched today (24 June) at the House of Lords at an event hosted by Lord Ian McNicol and sponsored by Baroness Brenda Dacres OBE. The launch event featured an address by the Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms, who spoke on the importance of preventing work-related ill health, keeping people in work and growing the economy.

The principles were developed by the onshore Chemicals and Major Hazards working group, as a response to Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Prevention Programme, to place clear accountability on senior leaders, building on the model established for process safety leadership following the 2005 Buncefield tragedy.

The working group involved HSE alongside trade associations, unions and employers, including the Chemical Business Association, Chemical Industries Association, GMB Union, Grain LNG, National Gas, Tank Storage Association, Unite the Union and Yorkshire Water.

The launch of the principles reflects a shared commitment to preventing work-related ill health through the sharing of best practice and key learnings to drive continuous improvement. The Principles were built on a proven model following the Buncefield incident in 2005. Industry developed the Process Safety Leadership Principles, which have since become a foundational standard across onshore and offshore major hazard sites. The same rigour is now being applied to occupational health.

The initiative also aligns with Sir Charlie Mayfield's Keep Britain Working review, reinforcing a cross-government approach to reducing the economic and human cost of preventable work-related ill health.

Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms, said: "The launch of the Principles of Workplace Health and Wellbeing Leadership marks an important step towards improving health and wellbeing in the onshore chemicals and major hazards industry. I welcome its clear focus on preventing work-related ill health. Working together, we can create healthier workplaces, support economic growth and raise living standards."

Ken Rivers, Non-Executive Board Member for the Health and Safety Executive, said: "These Principles of Workplace Health and Wellbeing Leadership represent a significant step forward in how we approach occupational health across the major hazard industries. By bringing together regulators, industry leaders and trade unions, we have created a framework that builds on the sector's proven track record in process safety leadership. I am pleased to have contributed to this collaborative effort, which I believe will help businesses protect their most valuable asset; their people."

Peter Davidson, CEO of the Tank Storage Association, said: "The Tank Storage Association has played an active role in the Working Group since its inception. These principles reflect our firm commitment to workforce wellbeing and cross-industry collaboration. I am proud to support this important initiative on behalf of the bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector."

Luke Collins, National Health and Safety Advisor, Unite Central Office, said: "Work-related ill health remains one of the greatest challenges facing workplaces across Great Britain. These Principles rightly recognise that protecting workers' health and wellbeing requires visible leadership, meaningful worker engagement, competent management, and a relentless focus on prevention. Unite strongly supports the principle that workplace health must be given the same priority as safety, with board-level accountability and effective trade union and workforce involvement at its heart. By working collaboratively, sharing learning, and focusing on both leading and lagging indicators, employers, workers, and trade unions can help prevent harm, improve wellbeing, and create healthier, more productive workplaces for all. From a personal perspective, it is great to be involved with an initiative that is driven by likeminded, supportive professionals aiming towards the same goal; healthier workplaces!"

Clare Middleton, Head of Safety, Health & Wellbeing, National Gas, said: "This document is a really strong step forward in helping organisations take a more thoughtful and proactive approach to health and wellbeing. It clearly reinforces that looking after people isn't just the right thing to do - but it also drives better performance and resilience across the business. I particularly value the emphasis on visible leadership, early intervention, and genuine workforce involvement, as these are the areas that truly make a difference in practice. Overall, it provides a practical and encouraging framework that supports organisations in creating healthier, more engaged workplaces while reducing risk and improving long-term outcomes."

Simon Culkin, Managing Director, Grain LNG, said: "The Workplace Health and Wellbeing Leadership Principles provide businesses with a structured approach on how to both manage and measure the health and wellbeing of their employees. Grain LNG are proud to have been involved in helping to develop these principles and help close the gap between safety and health in industry, and in doing so, raise the standard of this important area."

Stephen Elliott, Chief Executive of the Chemical Industries Association, said: "The future of our industry is built on people – their energy, creativity, and resilience. These Workplace Health & Wellbeing Principles are a call to action in shaping workplaces where every individual can flourish. By embracing wellbeing as a shared commitment, we unlock potential, spark innovation, and create a culture that inspires pride and purpose. Together, we can lead the way in setting a new standard – one where thriving people drive thriving businesses,"

Susan Gee, Head of Occupational Health & Wellbeing, Yorkshire Water, said: "At Yorkshire Water, protecting the health and wellbeing of our people is a core business priority, not an optional extra. We recognise the significant impact that work-related ill health can have on individuals, their families and the wider economy, and we are committed to acting early to prevent harm wherever possible. Through ongoing investment in workplace health, open reporting of concerns and a strong focus on understanding and managing health risks, we aim to create a working environment where every colleague has the best possible opportunity to stay well and thrive at work."

Tim Doggett, Chief Executive, Chemical Business Association, said: “People are our greatest asset, and health and safety has always been at the heart of what we do. We were pleased to play an active role in the development of these Principles of Workplace Health & Wellbeing Leadership, which provide a practical framework for creating workplaces where people feel supported, listened to and valued. The Principles reinforce the vital role that leadership, culture and workforce engagement play in promoting positive wellbeing and building stronger organisations. Investing in the health and wellbeing of our workforce is not simply the right thing to do; it is a shared responsibility that helps create safer, more inclusive and supportive workplaces for everyone.”

Lynsey Mann, National Health, Safety and Environment Officer, GMB, said: “GMB are pleased to have played a part in the development of these Principles and strongly welcome their introduction. They mark an important step forward in strengthening leadership and raising standards for workplace health and wellbeing across the onshore chemicals and major hazards sectors, helping to ensure that workers in these industries are protected. We hope representatives from other industries will replicate this work in their sector working groups too.”

Ends

Note: HSE’s Prevention Programme is industry-led programme aiming to reduce work-related ill health. It brings together over 90 leaders from across industry, trade associations and unions to drive genuine culture change in how workplaces manage health risks, treating them with the same rigour currently applied to safety.

HSE brings 10 sectors together and supports collective action, creating the conditions for progress. Industry leaders are best placed to drive improvement within their own sectors, using shared learning and peer influence to embed change in a practical and lasting way.

HSE urges construction companies to strengthen site security

As school holidays approach, construction companies across the region are being urged to take additional precautions to keep children safe this summer.

While rare, children have tragically lost their lives, and others have been injured, after making their way on to unsecure and unsafe construction sites.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is calling on the construction industry

to prevent children from accessing construction sites during the school holiday period, to stop children being injured or worse in pursuit of innocent fun and curiosity.

HSE is reminding those in control of sites that they have a duty to do everything they can to keep children out of the site and away from danger, with the following specific steps particularly relevant to child safety:

- Where necessary, to reflect the nature of the site and the surrounding area, ensure suitable perimeter fencing or hoarding is erected.
- Regularly check and review site security to ensure fencing or hoarding is maintained and kept in good order.
- Secure sites adequately when finishing work for the day.
- Barrier off or cover over excavations and pits.
- Isolate and immobilise vehicles and plant and if possible, lock them in a compound.
- Store building materials (such as pipes, manhole rings, and cement bags) so that they cannot topple or roll over.
- Remove access ladders from excavations and scaffolds.
- Lock away hazardous substances.

The school holiday period serves as a timely reminder that site security is not only a legal responsibility but a vital part of protecting local communities, especially when schools are closed and children have more free time to be outside.

HSE has a range of guidance and further information available to help manage the risks: [Protecting the public](#)

HSE's Mike Thomas said: "Construction site managers should check their sites are secure, and in areas where children live and play, they should remain vigilant and ensure that the risks to children are properly controlled.

"Construction sites are places of work and contain numerous hazards, all of which can pose a dangerous threat to anyone entering without permission. Clients and contractors must ensure that unauthorised access onto sites is prevented, both during and outside working hours."

Further information:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
 - Guidance referred to in this release can be found: [HSG 151 – Protecting the public – your next move](#)
 - Other guidance referred to in this release can be found: [CIS72 – Protecting the public: What you need to know as a busy builder](#)

1. The relevant law in relation to unauthorised site access is set out in Regulations 13(4), 15(10) and 4(6) of the [Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2015](#)
 2. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available
 3. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#).
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Company fined after employee seriously injured by reversing flat-bed truck

- Employee sustained life-changing injuries when struck by a reversing vehicle.
- HSE investigation found the workplace did not have proper measures to separate vehicles and pedestrians.
- Nearly one in four workplace vehicle incidents involving reversing – HSE guidance advises setting up one-systems to remove the need for reversing.

A landscaping and civil engineering company has been fined £125,000 after a man was seriously injured when struck by a reversing vehicle in Wolverhampton.

The 58-year-old employee of Jack Moody Landscaping and Civil Engineering Limited suffered life-changing injuries after a visiting flatbed truck reversed into him as he walked across the company's site at Hollybush Farm on Warstone Road on 22 September 2017. The worker sustained serious head injuries, damage to his eyesight, and significant mental and psychological trauma.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the workplace had not been organised to allow pedestrians and vehicles to circulate safely. There were no clearly demarcated pedestrian routes, no instructions for drivers on safe vehicle manoeuvring, and inadequate arrangements to ensure vehicles could reverse without risk to those on foot.

Nearly a quarter of all deaths involving workplace transport occur during reversing. Many other reversing accidents do not result in injury but cause costly damage to vehicles, equipment and premises.

HSE guidance on [reversing](#) advises to remove the need for reversing altogether by setting up one-way systems, for example drive-through loading and unloading positions. Where reversing is unavoidable, routes should be organised to minimise the need for reversing.

Jack Moody Landscaping and Civil Engineering Limited, of Hollybush Farm, Warstone Road, Shareshill, Wolverhampton, was found guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 following a trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court in November 2025. The company was fined £125,000 and ordered to pay £150,000 in costs at a sentencing hearing at the same court on 15 June 2026.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Principal Inspector Laura Royales said:

“This was a completely avoidable incident, caused by the company’s failure to put in place very straightforward measures to separate vehicles and pedestrians.

“Workplace transport incidents remain one of the most common causes of fatal injuries in this sector, and it is fortunate that this incident did not prove fatal.

“Employers must ensure their workplaces are properly organised to keep workers safe.”

Further information:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) are available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here: [Introduction to workplace transport safety – HSE](#)
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#).