

Fine for waste company that stockpiled skips and put workers at risk

- Company had skips piled three-high in places.
- Risk of collapse described as 'potentially catastrophic'.
- HSE guidance on the clear segregation between vehicles and pedestrians.

A waste and recycling company in South East London has been fined after Britain's workplace regulator found multiple failures, including skips being dangerously stockpiled.

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited the site of Recycling Material Supplies Limited on Ashleigh Commercial Estate, Westmoor Street on 11 August 2022. When they arrived, the inspectors observed various vehicles, including tipper lorries and loading shovels being driven freely around the site. The pedestrian entrance was chained and padlocked, with pedestrians forced to use the vehicle entrance route used by lorries and other vehicles. There was no effective segregation by designated pedestrian routes or crossing points.



Skips were found to be piled three-high in places

Health and safety legislation requires workplaces to be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate safely. Where large vehicles must reverse, employers must consider additional precautions and implement them where appropriate to protect those working nearby.

Although the company had a visual traffic plan, it was not visible to staff or visitors and was out of date because the site configuration had changed since it was produced, meaning it did not address key pedestrian movements such as access across the yard to toilets.

Inspectors also found skips unsafely stacked, with some of them deformed, adding to the instability. The height of the stack – which was three-high in places – also increased the likelihood of collapse or falling. The skips were also stacked in an area regularly accessed by workers, on foot or in

vehicles, placing them at great risk of them falling.



Skips were stacked in an area regularly accessed by workers

The concerns led to a further visit 11 days later after a number of improvement notices were served requiring the company to take action within a specified timescale to remedy health and safety breaches of law. The subsequent HSE investigation found that the company had previously been the subject of enforcement action, with prohibition notices served in 2019 in relation to stockpiling and risks of collapse.

Recycled Material Supplies Limited, of Building 3, Ashleigh Commercial Estate, 87 Westmoor Street, London, failed to fulfil duties under Section 2 and Section 3 of the Act by putting employees, agency workers and other persons on site at risk of death and/or serious personal injury and pleaded guilty of two offences under s33(1)(a) of the Act.

The company was fined £167,000 and was ordered to pay £16,195 costs at a hearing at Southwark Crown Court on 5 May 2026.

HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz said:

“This company put the lives of its workers at danger in a number of ways.

“Given the size and weight of skips, the potential consequences of any collapse were potentially catastrophic.

“The waste and recycling industry has a poor safety record and it is only due to sheer good fortune that nobody was seriously injured or killed.

“The fact this company had previously been made aware of its legal duties, makes this case the more stark.

“We take these failures seriously and will hold those to account who fail to keep their workers and other people safe.”

The HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz and paralegal officer Melissa Wardle.

Further information:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) 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 found here: [Workplace transport safety](#) and [hand sorting of recyclables with vehicle assistance \(PDF\)](#).
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 in England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).