

HSE inspectors checking asbestos management

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) marks Global Asbestos Awareness Week (1–7 April), highlighting free guidance and training resources available to help dutyholders and trades comply with the law.
- HSE inspectors visiting premises and construction sites check that asbestos is being managed in compliance with the law and workers are kept safe.
- Regulator outlines three main areas businesses should look to improve.

To mark Global Asbestos Awareness Week (1–7 April), HSE is advising dutyholders to check they are compliant in areas that inspectors find need improving when visiting premises.

Building owners, landlords and tradespeople who fail to manage asbestos risks may face prosecution. The most common pitfalls found by inspectors are:

- asbestos management plans not in place to ensure the condition of asbestos-containing materials is routinely monitored
- information, instruction, and training provided for managing asbestos is inadequate
- procedures and arrangements to manage work liable to disturb known or presumed asbestos-containing materials need improving.

Nicholas James from HSE's engagement and policy division, said: "The law requires that asbestos in buildings is proactively managed and monitored. This means active monitoring – not a one-off check. The priorities are clear – accurate identification and assessment of asbestos-containing materials, robust procedures and arrangements for managing risk, ongoing active management and condition monitoring, effective communication and relevant training. Don't let poor management arrangements be the reason an inspector finds you failing."

HSE provides a host of free guidance and advice for dutyholders at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos.

HSE inspectors can visit premises without warning. Where management is found to be lacking, enforcement action is taken to require that appropriate asbestos risk management measures are put in place. Non-compliance can result in prosecution, fines and criminal records.

The legal duty to manage asbestos applies to a wide range of non-domestic and multi-occupancy premises – from offices, factories and shops to schools, hospitals and places of worship. It applies to building owners, landlords and those responsible for maintenance and repair.

Four steps every dutyholder must take:

- Arrange an asbestos survey, or review any existing ones

- Create a register and assess the risk
- Write an asbestos management plan
- Put the plan into action and keep it under review

When managed properly and in good condition, the risk from asbestos is low. Ensuring those that need to take actions understand how to keep asbestos-containing materials in buildings safe is critical for complying with the law.

When removal, refurbishment, maintenance or repair work is required, it needs to be carried out safely and in accordance with regulations. Workers in construction and building trades are at particular risk of disturbing asbestos. These workers should receive asbestos awareness training to help ensure they do not carry out tasks that could disturb asbestos, and any materials that may contain asbestos must be properly identified before work begins through a suitably intrusive refurbishment or demolition survey. All work on asbestos-containing materials requires specific training. Carrying out work without the correct training and controls is illegal.

A recent prosecution shows the consequences of getting it wrong. A site manager received a suspended prison sentence, a five-year director disqualification and an electronically monitored curfew after failing to use a licensed contractor to clear asbestos from a demolition site. The two companies involved were fined a combined £88,300 and ordered to pay over £9,000 in costs and surcharges.

HSE Inspector, Rob Gidman, said: "Asbestos is a Class 1 carcinogen which is known to kill around 20 tradespeople each week due to past exposure. By failing to ensure the demolition was properly planned and managed, considering the presence of asbestos on site, these companies and the site manager put workers and members of the public at risk of being exposed to a substance known to cause fatal lung disease.

"This case should serve as a reminder to those engaged in demolition and refurbishment work that they have responsibilities when it comes to managing the risks associated with asbestos."

Support is available

- [Asbestos & You](#) – free practical guide for tradespeople
- [Asbestos: Your Duty](#) – guidance for building owners and landlords
- [Download the poster](#) as a quick reminder of what you need to do
- Find out what level of [training](#) your role requires at hse.gov.uk

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. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) are available at press.hse.gov.uk.
3. Relevant guidance can be found at hse.gov.uk: [Asbestos – HSE](#)

4. HSE's has two campaigns "[Asbestos and You](#)" and "[Asbestos Your Duty](#)" reminding tradespeople about the dangers of asbestos and the importance of working safely with it, also to reach those responsible for the maintenance and repair of non-domestic buildings.
5. Global Asbestos Awareness Week runs from 1 to 7 April 2026.
6. 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 relevant sentencing councils provides guidelines for health and safety offences for [England](#) and [Scotland](#) on their websites.