

# HSE to carry out inspections following safety alert

HSE is reminding employers that they must protect their workers' health by controlling the risks from welding fume.

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) current programme of inspections will review health and safety standards across the country and businesses are encouraged to visit [HSE's revised guidance](#) to remind themselves of the changes to control expectations.

To protect your workers' health, you must ensure you have adequate controls in place to avoid or reduce exposure to welding fume. Employers should be using local exhaust ventilation where effective and provide suitable respiratory protective equipment where necessary to protect workers in the metal fabrication industry from inhaling fumes.

The inspections follow a safety alert that was issued in February 2019 after new evidence showed exposure to mild steel welding fume can cause cancer and HSE updated guidance to reflect this.

[Scientific evidence](#) from the International Agency for Research on Cancer shows that exposure to mild steel welding fume can cause lung cancer and possibly kidney cancer in humans.

John Rowe, Head of Manufacturing at HSE said: "Employers and workers should know the risk, plan their work and use the right controls when welding activity is carried out. If they are not HSE will use enforcement to bring about improvements."

"It is our mission that all workers are protected and are not made ill or killed by their work. Everyone should be able to leave work and go home healthy and safe."

HSE has a range of guidance to help you protect your workers and [COSHH advice sheets](#) to help you control risk from hazardous substances in welding. You can also [sign up to our newsletter](#) to receive ongoing information and follow us on Twitter @H\_S\_E.

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