

Sheffield skip hire boss avoids immediate spell behind bars

The director of a Sheffield-based skip hire company has avoided an immediate spell behind bars after being found guilty of multiple breaches of health and safety law.

Following an investigation and subsequent prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Jamie White, the director of M White (Skips) Limited, was given an eight month custodial sentence, suspended for a period of 12 months. His company was fined £65,000.

Both White and his company appeared at Sheffield Magistrates Court on 23 January 2025 to be sentenced, the same court where they had been found guilty of several charges brought by the HSE following a five day trial in October last year.



The piles of waste found by HSE inspectors at the company's site in Sheffield

HSE has detailed guidance on [waste management and recycling](#) including about how it should be safely [sorted and processed](#).

The court heard that HSE inspectors visited the company's site on Worthing Road in the Attercliffe area of Sheffield, on 8 August 2022, after receiving multiple reports of poor conditions both there and along the public highway. When inspectors arrived, they found skips loaded with waste material stacked along the public highway and piles of other waste preventing workers from safely moving around the site, as well as blocking access to welfare facilities, including the staff toilets.

Immediate action was taken by HSE, with prohibition notices being issued preventing any further stacking of the already loaded skips. However, a follow-up visit less than a month later found no improvements had been made – as well as evidence the enforcement action had been ignored.



HSE received multiple reports of poor conditions both there and along the public highway

Subsequent enquiries found the company did not hold Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance), a legal requirement for employers. Further prohibition notices were served, including the prevention of hand sorting of waste materials from skips on the public pavement due to the obvious risks to members of public trying to walk past.

The subsequent HSE investigation found there had been a steep decline in general health and safety standards at the firm, giving rise to significant risk to employees and members of the public. With no effective health and safety management and an apparent loss of control over general conditions, there had been no attempt to reduce the risk from hazards on site to safeguard employees. The company, and White, failed to comply with the law, despite enforcement notices being served requiring action to be taken.



Piles of waste prevented workers from safely moving around the site

M White (Skips) Limited of Worthing Road, Attercliffe, Sheffield pleaded guilty to non-compliance with three Prohibition notices and to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and also Section 1(1) of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969. The Company was fined £65,000 and ordered to pay £13,280 in costs at a hearing at Sheffield Magistrates Court on 23 January 2025.

Jamie White, of Blonk Street Sheffield, Director of the company when HSE visited, pleaded guilty to non-compliance with two Prohibition notices and to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act

1974 by virtue of Section 37(1), and also Section 1(1) of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969. He was given an eight month custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, and must complete 150 hours of unpaid work. He was also disqualified as a company director for a period of three years and ordered to pay £13,280 in costs.

After the hearing the HSE inspector Laura Hunter said: "As the sole director, Jamie White also worked on the site and was fully aware of the poor conditions which his employees were subjected to.

"Full skips were deposited and stored on the public highway, with employees later needing to use the street to sort through waste materials when the site became inaccessible.

"By law, employers are required to insure against liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment – it is compulsory insurance. Mr White failed to arrange for his company to obtain it for his workers, despite HSE serving an enforcement notice legally requiring him to do so.

"Companies should ensure that they understand and follow health and safety laws and guidance and act responsibly to protect both their employees and the public from the activities under their control."

The HSE prosecution was brought by senior enforcement lawyer James Towey and enforcement lawyer Kate Harney, supported by paralegal officer Imogen Isaac.

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](#) is available.
4. 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](#).
5. HSE guidance on [waste management and recycling](#) and about how it should be safely [sorted and processed](#) is available.
6. HSE guidance for employers on [Employers' Liability Insurance](#) is also available.