



HSE CAMPAIGN – ASBESTOS THE HIDDEN KILLER

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are currently running a series of adverts to raise awareness to the risks associated with Asbestos for construction and maintenance contractors. The campaign is aimed at the tradesmen who have been found to be most at risk from exposure to Asbestos fibres, through the course of their daily lives. The statistics are shocking:

- Asbestos related diseases are responsible for 4,000 deaths per annum, that is greater than the number of deaths on Britain's roads.
- Every week 20 tradesmen die from Asbestos related diseases, from plumbers, electricians, builders and joiners.
- Asbestos is widespread and can be found in most public buildings constructed or refurbished before the year 2000.

Asbestos was widely used as a building material for its tensile strength, thermal and fire protection properties, throughout all types of buildings. It can be found in schools, boiler rooms, church halls, libraries and public swimming pools in fact it is all around us. Asbestos is currently regarded as the UK's biggest occupational health issue and the recent steady rise in Asbestos related deaths has catapulted the issue into the headlines and has therefore become a priority for the HSE.

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 place a duty upon those in control of maintenance works in publicly accessed premises. A requirement is placed upon the 'Duty Holder' to ensure that Asbestos containing materials are located, assessed and kept within a register and that their condition is regularly monitored and managed. These records must be made available to any maintenance contractors employed at the premises in order for them to include them in their own risk assessment.

Furthermore contractors are now also duty bound to ensure that their staff have Asbestos Awareness Training, so that they can avoid disturbing materials in the course of their activities and in turn reduce the risk of exposure to both themselves and the occupiers of that premises.

Despite the regulations being in place since 2006, it is apparent that the message has not yet been heard by many of the tradesmen at risk. The recent campaign aims to address this knowledge gap and highlight the risks to the health of those working within these trades. We urge all our colleagues and clients to consider whether they are compliant with their legal obligations with regard to the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 as failure to do so may result in substantial fines and enforcement action.

The LK Group can assist companies with their shortfall in compliance and undertake Type 1, Type 2 or Type 3 Asbestos surveys to establish the presence of Asbestos and report the findings. The LK Group can also undertake risk assessments of Asbestos containing materials, develop management action plans and arrange any required removal or remediation works.

LK Group can also provide Asbestos awareness training for building managers, maintenance workers, plumbing, building, electrical and joinery contractors. For further information and to discuss any requirements or queries about your obligations please contact Clair Leyden on 0161 763 7200.

MANCHESTER OFFICE

Bury Business Centre
Kay Street
Bury
BL9 6BU

Tel: 0161 763 7200

LIVERPOOL OFFICE

The Corn Exchange
Fenwick Street
Liverpool
L2 7QL

Tel: 0151 235 8716

GLASGOW OFFICE

The Wright Business Centre
Lonmay Road
Glasgow
G33 4EL

Tel: 0141 773 6269

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