

Risk management tips brought to you by the insurance professionals at **Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd**

DID YOU KNOW?

On average, twenty tradespeople die every week from asbestos-related diseases—and asbestos is still present in millions of homes and buildings.

4th Quarter 2014

HSE Launches New Asbestos Safety Campaign Amid Sobering Survey Results

The HSE recently launched a new asbestos safety campaign in response to new, sobering survey results that highlight the threat of asbestos exposure to construction workers, carpenters, painters, decorators and more. On average, these tradespeople could come into contact with deadly asbestos more than 100 times a year, according to a survey commissioned by the HSE.

Even worse, the HSE estimates that 1.3 million tradespeople are at risk from the dangers of asbestos, and approximately twenty tradespeople die every week from asbestos-related diseases.

The situation would not be so dire if workers were equipped with the necessary knowledge to protect themselves—only 30 per cent of workers surveyed were able to identify all the correct measures for

working with asbestos safely, whilst more than 57 per cent made at least one potentially lethal mistake in identifying safe systems for working with asbestos.

To help promote awareness of asbestos' dangers, the HSE introduced a new, free web app for phones, tablets and laptops that helps tradespeople easily identify where they could come into contact with the deadly material during their day-to-day work, and it also gives them tailored tips on how to deal with asbestos risks. Download the app here: www.beware-asbestos.info.



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What Do HSE Inspectors Look For?

From 22 September to 17 October, the HSE Construction Inspectors carried out unannounced visits to sites of refurbishment or sites of repair projects in an effort to reduce ill health, death and injury in the construction industry. During these types of inspections, inspectors look for the following:

- Risks to health from exposure to dust such as silica
- Whether workers know where they may find asbestos and the proper procedures if they do
- Exposure to noise, vibration, manual handling and hazardous substances
- Appropriate precautions for working at height
- Correctly installed, assembled, inspected and maintained equipment
- Clean, well-organised work sites

Protecting the Public on Your Construction Site

Construction sites are a flurry of dangerous activity. Hulking machines, deep ditches and dizzying heights are just some of the many hazards present on construction sites every single day. What makes them more dangerous is the fact that not all construction sites are located in rural areas. In fact, some are located in the heart of busy, congested urban areas. By law you must protect your employees—but that also extends to members of the public on or near your construction site. To do this, heed the following three top tips:

1. **Restrict access to your construction site.** Define your site's boundaries with suitable fencing, where necessary. Choose the type of fencing that reflects the nature of your site and its surroundings. In highly populated areas, a 2-metre-high, small mesh fence is usually sufficient to delineate your site's boundary. Remember to maintain your site's fencing—if one part collapses and unauthorised visitors gain access and hurt themselves, you could be held responsible.
2. **Manage hazards that can cause risk to the public.** Many of the same hazards you manage in order to protect your employees also threaten members of the public—do not forget the public when devising strategies to manage your risks. For example, make sure objects cannot fall outside the site boundary by using toe-boards, brick guards and netting on scaffolding. Also, implement controls that prevent scaffolding from falling on people outside the boundary. Make sure pedestrians cannot be struck by vehicles entering or leaving the site, and prohibit drivers from obstructing the pavement, as this may force pedestrians into the road where they can be struck by other vehicles.
3. **Protect vulnerable groups of people who may need special attention.** Depending on the location of your construction site, you may need to work in close proximity with members of vulnerable groups who need special attention, such as the elderly, children and people with certain disabilities. Children will require even more consideration, as many are drawn to construction sites as exciting places to play. Follow best practices such as locking away hazardous substances, covering excavations and pits and isolating and immobilising vehicles and plant to prevent anyone from inadvertently tampering with them.

You are responsible for protecting the public and your employees—do not fail either. Use resources from the insurance professionals at **Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd** to ensure your site stays safe at all times.

Recent News and Prosecutions

Builder photographed risking lives

A 61-year-old Wirral builder was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay £2,457 in prosecution costs after he was caught, on camera, risking the lives of his workers on a house roof. HSE inspectors were investigating the builder following a complaint from a member of the public when they photographed the builder and two of his workers re-roofing a detached house in Kingsley, Cheshire without any measures in place to prevent them from falling a distance of more than 4 metres to the ground. Even worse, the workers had to jump over a 1-metre gap from their scaffolding tower in a neighbouring garden to reach the roof.

Firm sentenced after barrier fell on baby's pram

A Bedfordshire construction firm was fined £4,000 for safety failings after a barrier was blown on top of a pram, injuring an 18-week-old baby. The baby was asleep in his pram while his mother used a cash machine outside of a supermarket that was being refurbished by the construction firm in Drip Road, Stirling. A barrier separating the public from ongoing construction work fell on top of the pram hood, bruising the baby's forehead. An HSE investigation found that the barriers had not been filled with water and were not locked together to ensure stability.