

Balfour Beatty prosecuted for school asbestos safety breach

Description

Construction giants, Balfour Beatty, have been prosecuted and fined a whopping £500,000 after pleading guilty to a breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act. They were one of three contractors that were involved in building works that took place at Waltham Forest school.

Each contractor received a fine for breaching asbestos safety regulations. Workers on the job were apparently exposed to asbestos on the 24th July 2012 following the strip out of a suspended ceiling which contained asbestos. An investigation was later conducted at St Mary's CoE Primary.

This investigation revealed that asbestos fibres were present throughout the school.

Southwark Crown Court heard that Waltham Forest Borough Council had contracted NPS London Limited to manage both the development and refurbishment of the site. Mansell Construction Services were the principal contractors at the time of the incident (a former Balfour Beatty brand) and the subcontractor was Squibb Group Limited.

HSE carry out investigation

The HSE (Health and Safety Executive) later carried out their own investigation and discovered that although an asbestos survey was actually completed, there was warning of multiple issues given, which nobody followed up on. As a consequence, all three companies involved received a hefty fine for ignoring these warnings.

Balfour Beatty Construction Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at work act and were fined £500,000 plus costs of £32,364.84. NPS London pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) and were fined £370,000 plus costs of £32,364.84. And Squibb Group pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and were fined £400,000 plus costs of £175,000.

Sarah Robinson, HSE inspector, said after the hearing, "The principal contractor and contractors on site did not review the survey report in detail, and did not take into consideration the multitude of caveats."

"Therefore the work undertaken did not adopt the high standards of control expected for working where there was the potential to expose workers to asbestos."

CATEGORY

1. Essex

POST TAG

1. Balfour Beatty
2. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

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3. Sarah Robinson (HSE)
 4. Squibb Group

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