
Bosses Ignoring Asbestos Removal Regulations Put Tradespeople at Risk

Description

Asbestos remains a significant threat, even decades after its ban in the UK. On November 24, 2024, we will mark 25 years since all forms of asbestos were outlawed. Yet, a recent study reveals a troubling trend among tradespeople: many are being instructed by their bosses to handle asbestos removal themselves. This alarming practice puts their lives and health at serious risk.

Research conducted by High Speed Training, a leading online training provider, sheds light on the ambivalence surrounding asbestos among tradespeople. Despite the tragic reality that around 5,000 people die each year from asbestos-related illnesses, half of the tradespeople surveyed reported that their concern about asbestos has diminished over time. This is concerning.

The study identified several reasons for this diminishing concern:

1. **Asbestos as a Problem of the Past:** 36% of tradespeople view asbestos as an issue that no longer affects them.
2. **Long-standing Ban:** 33% believe that since asbestos has been banned for so long, it is no longer a threat.
3. **Exposure Probability:** 17% feel that they have likely already been exposed to asbestos, making them less worried.
4. **Lack of Knowledge:** 12% admit they do not know enough about asbestos to be concerned.
5. **Misconceptions About Quantity:** 10% think asbestos is only dangerous in large amounts.

Dr. Richard Anderson, head of learning and development at High Speed Training, emphasizes the ongoing danger of asbestos. "While it has been banned since 1999, asbestos still exists in many buildings across the UK. Some reports suggest that it is present in as many as 1.5 million structures. It can take 30 years or more for symptoms of related diseases to surface. This highlights the urgent need for better awareness among tradespeople, their families, and the public."

When asked about their training experiences, over 40% of tradespeople expressed dissatisfaction. They believe the training is inadequate. Specifically, 20% felt it lacked authority, while 19% found the information outdated. Alarmingly, 11% described their training as merely a box-ticking exercise.

Among those who have knowingly come into contact with asbestos, a staggering 26% admitted they did not follow the recommended removal procedures. The reasons for this negligence are telling:

- **Cost Concerns:** 55% believe that following proper procedures is too expensive.
- **Boss Instructions:** 26% reported being told by their supervisors to handle it themselves.
- **Lack of Safety Equipment:** 17% cited not having the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).

Dr. Anderson stresses the importance of adhering to asbestos removal regulations. "These regulations exist to limit the risk of exposure to harmful fibers. It is crucial that guidelines are followed by trained

professionals. Asbestos removal should never be attempted by untrained individuals, whether they are tradespeople or members of the public. Disturbing asbestos can release harmful fibers into the air, posing serious health risks.”

A Call for Change for Future Generations

Despite nearly half of tradespeople viewing asbestos as a relic of the past, there is a consensus on the need for increased awareness about its dangers. A significant 74% of tradespeople believe that their families should be better informed. Additionally, 69% agree that the general public needs more education on this issue.

Moreover, over two-thirds (70%) of tradespeople advocate for compulsory asbestos training for apprentices and college students. This is a critical step toward ensuring safety in the workplace.

In response to these findings, High Speed Training, in partnership with Mesothelioma UK and the Independent Asbestos Training Providers (IATP), is urging the Department for Education to include asbestos education in the curriculum for apprentices and college students. This initiative aims to equip those entering trades with the knowledge necessary to protect themselves and others.

Dr. Anderson concludes, “Our research indicates that many tradespeople either lack awareness or have become desensitized to the dangers of asbestos. This open letter seeks to ensure that those entering careers with high exposure risks are educated about asbestos. It is vital for their safety and the safety of those around them, now and in the future.”

CATEGORY

1. Uncategorized

Category

1. Uncategorized

Date

14/11/2024

Date Created

09/11/2024