

HSE CONSTRUCTION HEALTH RISKS BLITZSTARTS

Poor working conditions likely to lead to ill-health on construction projects are now being targeted by HSE Construction Inspectors.

HSE is concerned that for every fatal accident in the construction industry, it is estimated that a worker is at least 100 times more likely to die from a disease caused or made worse by their work.

The two-week concentrated inspection “drive” began on Monday 23 June 2014 and involves HSE unannounced visits across the country which will focus on ill-health on construction sites.

Poor risk management and awareness unacceptable

On every site visited inspectors will be taking steps to ensure that there are [acceptable standards](#) for:

- [Dust control](#) - including silica containing materials;
- [Hazardous substances](#) (other) - e.g. cement, lead in paint;
- [Manual handling and repetitive tasks](#) - e.g. involving twisting or awkward posture
- [Noise control](#) - assessment, reduction, controls and RPE
- [Use of vibrating tools](#) - assessment, tool selection and management of exposure

In 2012/13, 39 construction workers were killed. However, more than 500 deaths a year are due to silica exposure alone.



HSE Chief Inspector of Construction, Heather Bryant, said:

“The construction sector has made good progress in reducing the number of people killed and injured by its activities. We need to tackle where workers are unnecessarily being exposed to serious health risks, such as silica dust, which can have fatal or debilitating consequences.

This initiative provides a chance to engage with these firms to help them understand what they need to do, so they can put in place the practical measures needed to keep people safe.

However, let me be clear – poor risk management and a lack of awareness of responsibilities is unacceptable. Companies who deliberately cut corners can expect to feel the full weight of the law.”