

HSE continues its 'Asbestos: Your Duty' campaign with local authorities

07 February 2025  Krishna Pancholi

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) continues their campaign 'Asbestos: Your Duty', aiming to improve understanding of the legal duty to manage asbestos.

The duty applies to all non-domestic premises, so the campaign's focus is on how local authority duty holders are managing the risk of harm from asbestos within their buildings. The HSE will undertake planned visits to council buildings, head offices and other sites within local authority portfolios, such as libraries, museums, gyms and leisure centres.

If asbestos is adequately contained and managed, those who visit or work in these buildings are not at risk; however, it becomes dangerous if it is disturbed or damaged.

Local authority controlled buildings constructed between 1950 and 1980 particularly - a period when asbestos use was most prevalent - must carry out the necessary checks to understand their legal responsibilities under Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and actively manage any asbestos containing materials for which they are responsible for.

To prepare for an inspection, local authorities should:

- **Take reasonable steps** to ascertain whether there are asbestos containing materials in their buildings and the status of it.
- **Presume materials contain asbestos**, unless there is strong evidence that they do not.
- **Make and keep updated records** of the location and condition of any asbestos containing materials.
- **Keep records up to date** and review asbestos management plans to make clear how the risks from asbestos are managed. The plans should be reviewed regularly.
- **Ensure asbestos exposure risk assessments** are up to date and review these regularly.
- **Be ready to provide the required information**, policies and risk assessments to the HSE.

HSE inspectors will contact local authorities before visiting to arrange the inspection. There are various case studies and example risk assessments and policies available on the [HSE website](#). The HSE has also provided guidance on how to [prepare for a duty to manage asbestos inspection](#).

Asbestos exposure in the UK remains the single greatest cause of work-related deaths even where exposure took place decades ago. Local authorities who have buildings containing asbestos should remind themselves of their duties to their employees and others who use their buildings and refer to the HSE's website for further information on how they can proactively manage those buildings and keep people safe from exposure.

Our expert regulatory and [health and safety](#) lawyers can advise, if you require any assistance with determining who is the responsible person, your legal and statutory duties under the Control of Asbestos Regulations, or how you can or how you can demonstrate that you are effectively managing asbestos within your organisation.



Krishna Pancholi

Associate

kpancholi@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)115 976 6250

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