

HSE releases annual workplace fatality figures for 2019/20

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has today released its annual figures for the number of [work-related fatalities in 2019/20](#), as well as the number of people known to have died from the asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma, in 2018.

The provisional annual data for work-related fatal accidents revealed that 111 workers were fatally injured at work between April 2019 and March 2020 (a rate of 0.34 deaths per 100,000 workers), the lowest year on record. This represents a fall of 38 deaths from the previous year, though it is likely that this fall was accentuated by the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on the economy in the final two months of the year.

In line with previous years' fatal injury statistics, these figures do not include deaths from occupational disease. Covid-19 infection is therefore not part of these figures and will not feature in fatal injury statistics in subsequent years*.

While there has been a long-term reduction in the number of annual fatalities (the number has almost halved in the last 20 years), aside from the current fall, the number has remained broadly level in recent years.

Following the release, HSE's chief executive, Sarah Albon, said:

"No one should be hurt or killed by the work they do. In these extraordinary times, we have seen many workers risking their lives to help others during the coronavirus outbreak. Although these statistics are not a reflection on Covid-19 related loss of life, it is a pertinent time to reflect.

"Every workplace fatality is a tragedy and while we are encouraged by this improvement, today's statistics is a reminder that we cannot become complacent as we look to continue to work together to make Great Britain an even safer place to live and work."

The new figures show the spread of fatal injuries across industrial sectors:

- 40 fatal injuries to construction workers were recorded, accounting for the largest share. However, over the last five years the number has fluctuated. The annual average for the past five years is 37. The annual average rate over the last five years in construction is around 4 times as high as the all industry rate.
- 20 fatal injuries to agricultural, forestry and fishing workers were recorded, the lowest level on record. Despite this fall, this sector continues to account for a large share of the annual fatality count. It has the highest rate of fatal injury of all the main industry sectors, around 18 times as high as the all industry rate.
- 5 fatal injuries to waste and recycling workers were recorded. Despite

being a relatively small sector in terms of employment, the annual average fatal injury rate over the last five years is around 18 times as high as the all industry rate.

Sarah Albon continued:

“These statistics remind us that in certain sectors of the economy, fatal injury in the workplace remains worryingly high. Agriculture, forestry and fishing accounts for a small fraction of the workforce of Great Britain, yet accounted for around 20 per cent of worker fatalities in the last year. This is unacceptable and more must be done to prevent such fatalities taking place.

“Work-related deaths fracture families, they shatter communities, and so many of them can be avoided. The work that HSE does is about more than numbers, we are continually working with duty holders to ensure that they assess and appropriately manage risk to their employees. These efforts are a vital part of keeping essential services going, particularly as duty holders adapt to the current circumstances.”

The three most common causes of fatal injuries continue to be; workers falling from height (29), being struck by a moving vehicle (20) and being struck by a moving object (18), accounting for 60 per cent of fatal injuries in 2019/20.

The new figures continue to highlight the risks to older workers; 27 per cent of fatal injuries in 2019/20 were to workers aged 60 or over, even though such workers make up only around 10 per cent of the workforce.

In addition, members of the public continue to be killed in connection with work-connected accidents. In 2019/20 51 members of the public were killed as a result of a work-connected accident in HSE enforced workplaces and a further 41 occurred on railways (enforced by the Office for Road and Rail). Typically, in recent years the number of such deaths has ranged between 12 and 16 deaths annually.

Mesothelioma, which is contracted through past exposure to asbestos and is one of the few work-related diseases where deaths can be counted directly, killed 2446 in Great Britain in 2018. This is slightly lower than the average 2550 over the previous five years.

The current figures are largely a consequence of occupational asbestos exposures that occurred before 1980. Annual mesothelioma deaths are expected to fall below current levels for years beyond 2020.

A fuller assessment of work-related ill-health and injuries, drawing on HSE’s full range of data sources, will be provided as part of the annual Health and Safety Statistics release on 4 November 2020.

Notes to Editors:

1. *Separate data about deaths associated with COVID-19 will be available at a later date.

2. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.
3. Further information on the annual statistic release can be found here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/fatals.htm>
4. Work-related fatal injuries: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/pdf/fatalinjuries-20.pdf>
5. Mesothelioma: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/mesothelioma/mesothelioma-20.pdf>
6. Latest HSE press releases: https://press.hse.gov.uk/?_ga=2.136239282.203039393.1593594147-1658317791.1529965200

The post [HSE releases annual workplace fatality figures for 2019/20](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Consultant fined for providing incompetent health and safety advice](#)

A self-employed consultant was fined for breach of legislation for providing health and safety advice on technical and complex matters while not being qualified to advise his clients.

Luton Crown Court heard how a self-employed health and safety consultant provided inadequate and flawed advice to small and medium sized enterprises on the management and control of risk in relation to hand arm vibration, workplace noise and the control of substances hazardous to health.

A HSE investigation found that Clive Weal incorrectly identified risk from exposure to hand arm vibration as 'low' and advised to use 'anti vibration gloves' as an appropriate control measure. He also failed to identify that paints containing isocyanates can cause asthma. The poor and incompetent advice resulted in a lack of remedial action being implemented to prevent employees being exposed to levels of noise, hand arm vibration and chemical substances that may have a damaging impact on their health.

Clive Weal of Torksey, Lincolnshire, was found to be incompetent at advising his clients in the assessment and control of risks from workplace noise, hand arm vibration and substances hazardous to health. He pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(2) of Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and was fined £1,400.

After the hearing, HSE specialist inspector, Parmjit Gahir said: “Employers are more likely to use external consultants to provide assistance in complex situations where a higher level of competence is required.

“How consultants achieve competence is up to them, however they will have to be able to satisfy employers that they have a sufficient level of competence for the job in hand.

“Being a member of a relevant professional body, which sets competence standards for its members and operates continuing professional development schemes is one way of helping; as is presenting evidence of relevant experience such as references from previous clients; or obtaining qualifications.”

Where health and safety consultants are found to be in breach of legislation, HSE will hold persons to account for their failings.

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3. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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[Tile manufacturers fined after employee suffered serious injuries](#)

A tile manufacturing company in Colchester has been fined after a worker was drawn into the in-running nip of a conveyor tail drum and suffered three breaks to his left arm and crush injuries to his forearm.



Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard how, on 18 February 2019, an employee was removing sand from the inside of a conveyor belt in an attempt to fix the machine at Slough Lane, Colchester. The employee's left glove became caught in the in-running nip of the conveyor tail drum, pulling his hand and arm into the machine. The emergency stop button in the building did not work, so a colleague had to run to another building to alert the operator at the control panel to turn the machine off.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to suitably assess the risks, implement a safe system of work, and control the risks. Employees were not trained in the use of isolation or lock off procedures for the machinery on site, nor were employees made aware that such procedures existed. There were no arrangements for the supervision or monitoring of employees to ensure they were correctly isolating and locking off machinery before completing maintenance tasks, and there was no functioning emergency stop in the vicinity of the conveyor tail drum. The guard on the conveyor tail drum had been removed and the conveyor was put into operation

Spartan Promenade Tiles Limited of Martells Industrial Estate, Colchester, Essex, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and have been fined £10,000 and ordered to pay full costs.

After the hearing HSE inspector Connor Stowers said "This injury could have been easily prevented and the risks should have been identified. Employers need to properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery, and adequately train their workers to use isolation and lock off procedures if they carry out maintenance work."

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[School fined after a pupil was severely injured using a band saw](#)

Cargilfield School has been fined following the incident where a pupil sustained severe cuts to his middle and index finger on his right hand and serious tendon damage, when using a band saw.

Edinburgh Sheriff Court heard that, between 1 September 2015 and 2 November 2017, in the Construction Design and Technology Workshop at Cargilfield School, Edinburgh, pupils made wooden boxes using a band saw which is classed as a dangerous machine.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Cargilfield School failed to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks arising out of or in connection with use of the band saw and failed to adequately supervise pupils while they were carrying out tasks using the band saw. The pupil was making a free hand cut on the band saw without adequate workpiece support and was not adequately supervised.

Cargilfield School of Gamekeepers Road, Edinburgh pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £3,350.

After the hearing, HSE inspector, Karen Moran said: "A band saw is considered a dangerous machine when used by adults, let alone children. This significant and very serious injury could have been prevented had the risk been identified and properly managed. All schools should take steps to ensure the safety of their pupils and HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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HSE SCIENTIST WINS ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY'S EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) principal scientist Dr Jackie Morton has received The Royal Society of Chemistry Exceptional Service Award.

Dr Morton, based at HSE's Science and Research Centre in Buxton, is part of a biological monitoring team whose work involves determining workplace exposures to chemicals. Her area of expertise includes the analyses of toxic elements (such as lead) in biological samples.

She was nominated for the award for her ongoing voluntary commitment to the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Sheffield and District Local Section; and, the RSC Atomic Spectroscopy Group.

Dr Morton is the programme secretary of RSC Sheffield and District Local Section and organises a variety of chemistry themed public events during the year including lectures, school and pub quizzes and school visits. This included a street event in Buxton earlier this year where school children were invited to visit booths and take part in hands on science experiments.

Dr Morton also acts as treasurer for the RSC Atomic Spectroscopy Group a national group of scientists and academics who share information and knowledge to collaborate in the pursuit of science. As part of this group Dr Morton supports younger scientists working in the Atomic Spectroscopy field and helps to organise a biennial conference to bring together national and international researchers.

She was nominated by colleagues from her team at HSE for an outstanding contribution to proactively and inclusively supporting colleagues and the wider scientific community.

After receiving the award, Dr Morton said: "I am honoured to be nominated for this award; my colleagues are very kind.

"I feel that promoting chemistry, locally in Sheffield and nationally in the atomic spectrometry world is important and worthwhile. If one child has been inspired to follow a scientific path, then that is reward enough. The volunteering that I do is always as part of a dedicated team and I thank them all."

Professor Andrew Curran, HSE's Chief Scientific Adviser, said: *"We are proud of Dr Morton's lifelong efforts to further the advancement of science.*

"She is a valued member of the team whose innovative work is helping to keep employees safe, while her voluntary activities are contributing to new developments through collaboration and inspiring the next generation of scientists.

"As a regulator we value having colleagues who are dedicated to their industry and community and Dr Morton is clearly a fantastic ambassador of science."

Dr Helen Pain, acting chief executive of the Royal Society of Chemistry said: *"We live in an era of tremendous global challenges, with the need for science recognised now more so than ever. It's incredibly important to recognise those who are making significant contributions behind the scenes towards improving the world we live in as well as inspiring colleagues within the chemical sciences community to do what they can for the people around them.*

"This award is about celebrating the efforts of the unsung heroes who go above and beyond to support their colleagues and our wider community. It is for this reason we are proud to be presenting this award to Dr Morton, for her outstanding service to the Royal Society of Chemistry through the activities of the Sheffield and District Local Section and the Atomic Spectroscopy Group."

The Royal Society of Chemistry's Exceptional Service Award recognises and celebrates those members who have made a positive impact by contributing through a variety of volunteer positions or over a sustained period of time.

As well as being named winner of the award, Dr Morton also receives a medal.

For further information, see [rsc.li/prizes-awards](https://www.rsc.li/prizes-awards)

Of those to have won a Royal Society of Chemistry Award, an illustrious list of 50 have gone on to win Nobel Prizes for their pioneering work, including 2016 Nobel laureates Jean-Pierre Sauvage, Fraser Stoddart and Ben Feringa.

Last year, the Royal Society of Chemistry announced it is reviewing its recognition mechanisms. Details of how the awards structure will be changed – to ensure that the way excellence is recognised is fit for today's needs – will be announced later this year.

ENDS

Issued by Weber Shandwick on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry

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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Rewarding Excellence and Gaining Recognition

The Royal Society of Chemistry's Prizes and Awards recognise achievements by individuals, teams and organisations in advancing the chemical sciences. We want to reward those undertaking excellent work in the chemical sciences from across the world.

There are over 80 Prizes and Awards in our main portfolio, all of which aim to accurately reflect the broad scope of achievement in our community. So whether you work in research, business, industry or education, recognition is open to everyone.

More information is available at: rsc.li/prizes-awards

Royal Society of Chemistry

We are an international organisation connecting chemical scientists with each other, with other scientists, and with society as a whole. Founded in 1841 and based in London, UK, we have an international membership of over 50,000. We use the surplus from our global publishing and knowledge business to give thousands of chemical scientists the support and resources required to make vital advances in chemical knowledge. We develop, recognise and celebrate professional capabilities, and we bring people together to spark new ideas and new partnerships. We support teachers to inspire future generations of scientists, and we speak up to influence the people making decisions that affect us all. We are a catalyst for the chemistry that enriches our world.

Health and Safety Executive

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