

Surveyor fined after failing to detect asbestos

A specialist asbestos company has been fined after failing to detect asbestos at a demolition site.

Greater Manchester Magistrates' Court heard how EAS Asbestos Limited were commissioned to conduct refurbishment and demolition surveys by Mercer Brother Limited, a construction company who were contracted to demolish garages for Hyndburn Homes. EAS Asbestos stated in their surveys that asbestos was only present in the cement roof sheets, there were no areas that could not be accessed, and that there was no asbestos insulation board present in the garages.

On Wednesday 1 February 2017, the demolition of the garages went ahead but work was immediately stopped when suspect material was found. Another surveying company was brought in and confirmed the presence of large amounts of asbestos insulation board in the demolition rubble.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the survey carried out by EAS Asbestos Limited was incorrect and misleading.

EAS Asbestos Limited of Lower Meadow Lane, Huthwaite, Sutton in Ashfield, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company was fined £6,700 and ordered to pay costs of £1,000 and a victim surcharge of £170.

Speaking after the case, HSE inspector Jacqueline Western said "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards".

Notes to Editors:

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

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.