

Woodworking company fined for dust exposure

A Norfolk woodworking company has been fined £25,000 for failing to control its employees' exposure to wood dust.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspection of The Joinery Yard Limited at Sweet Briar Road industrial estate, Norwich in November 2019 identified failings in the company's control measures to prevent exposure of their employees to wood dust. As a result, enforcement action was taken.

Wood dust is a respiratory sensitiser that can cause long term health effects including occupational asthma.

A subsequent inspection in July 2022 showed that the company had failed to maintain standards and enforcement action was taken again. This inspection identified ongoing failings in the company's control measures and found that they had failed to take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of workers exposed to wood dust.

HSE has guidance on working in the [woodworking industry](#) and is running the [Dust Kills: Wood Dust campaign page](#).

At a hearing at Norwich Magistrates' Court on 4 October, The Joinery Yard Ltd of Aylsham Road, Norwich, Norfolk pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Section 2 (1). They were fined £25,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2681.77.

After the hearing, HSE Inspector Natalie Prince said "The fine imposed on The Joinery Yard Limited should underline to everyone in the woodworking industry that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously.

"Wood dust can cause serious health problems and all businesses need to protect their workers' respiratory health.

"We will not hesitate to take action against companies which do not do all that they should to keep people safe."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Sam Crockett and paralegal officer Rebecca Forman.

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.

2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.