



HSE Bulletin Nov 2023

Are your workers being protected?

Earlier this month, HSE published the health and safety statistics for Great Britain (2022 to 2023).

The latest [statistics published](#) show an estimated 12,000 people died from lung diseases linked to exposure to hazardous substances at work.

There were an estimated 19,000 new cases of breathing and lung problems thought to be caused or made worse by their work. This includes inhalation of wood dust that can cause occupational asthma and, in the case of hardwoods, sinonasal cancer.

Work-related lung diseases have a devastating impact on workers' lives. If effective controls are in place, occupational lung diseases are preventable.

As HSE's inspection programme targeting woodworking businesses across Great Britain continues, ensure your business is managing the risks. The HSE have free resources and guidance for woodworking. You can:

- visit [Dust Kills woodworking campaign website](#)
- download [free guidance for woodworking \(.pdf\)](#)

Two companies fined for wood dust failures

Furniture company fined over multiple wood dust failures

Following HSE's inspection programme as part of our focus on the woodworking industry, a furniture company has been fined £16,000 after it repeatedly failed to protect its employees from exposure to wood dust.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Ian Betley said:

"It is important to carry out statutory thorough examinations of extraction equipment and ensure face fit testing, as required by COSHH to help prevent ill health."

[Read the full press release](#)

Woodworking company fined for dust exposure

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

HSE Inspector Natalie Prince said:

"The fine imposed should underline to everyone in the woodworking industry that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously."

[Read the full press release](#)

Did you know we can carry out Face Fit Testing?

If you provide respiratory protective equipment (RPE) to your employees, then it is essential that you have documentary evidence to show the RPE fits the wearer. By subjecting each wearer to a face-fit test you can be sure that your organisation is fulfilling the requirements laid out in the Health & Safety Executives (HSE) guidance note HSE 282/28 & <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg479.htm>



When Should Fit Testing be Carried Out?

A Fit Test can be carried out in the initial stages of selecting RPE, where an untested face piece is already in use or when the wearer has any significant facial changes (i.e. weight gain or loss, facial hair growth, etc). Fit testing does not need to be done annually but it is recommended that face piece wearers receive annual refresher training covering the selection, use & maintenance of their mask. When face pieces are issued on an individual basis, it is recommended that they receive an individual assessment on their own face piece.

Fittings are available throughout the year. Face Fit Testing - on-site course:

1 x half day for 1 to 12 people £350 + VAT

Book another 8 face fit tests (second course) to run on the same day and pay only £150 + VAT for the second half day.

Source HSE