

Asbestos toxic legacy must be tackled – British Safety Council chairman

3 years ago



Commenting on a report by the Work and Pensions Select Committee calling for asbestos to be removed from all public and commercial buildings within 40 years, Peter McGettrick, Chairman of British Safety Council, said:

“Just because asbestos use was banned in the UK twenty years ago, does not mean it has gone away. The UK’s public buildings are still riddled with it, and we know that teachers, nurses and other workers can become seriously ill, and in many cases die, if they come into contact with it over time.

“The Select Committee is right that we should remove asbestos from all our public and commercial buildings, and that a national register should be set up, as has been done in other European countries.

“The HSE should also be given extra funding and resources not just to manage this process across government and with local authorities, but also to ensure that existing regulations can be properly enforced. The report shows how few prosecutions and fines are given out for breaches of asbestos regulations and this must change if we are to get on top of this issue.

“With 5000 people still dying every year from asbestos-related diseases, this is not something we can ignore any more.”