

Asbestos Present in Schools

Mr Michael Lees, aged 61 is an avid asbestos campaigner following the death of his wife, Gina, from the fatal cancer mesothelioma in 2000.

As a result of a request under the Freedom of Information Act it has been found that 88 percent of schools in the South Tyneside area have traces of asbestos within their buildings.

Broken down, the figures, show that asbestos is present in 92 percent of primary schools, 89 percent of secondary schools, 80 percent of special schools and half of nurseries.

Even more alarmingly Mr Lees states on his website:

"There is increasing evidence that a significant number of schools are not managing their asbestos effectively, and that in many cases the asbestos is not in good condition and consequently there will be cases where the asbestos is deteriorating and the teachers, but more worryingly the children, will be exposed to it."

Mr Mick Lyons, executive member for the teachers union NASUWT said, speaking to the Shields Gazette:

"Something as little as pushing a pin in and out of a wall which contains asbestos can release 6,000 fibres."

"We would prefer schools to take all the asbestos out. Whether that's financially viable or not is another issue."

Mr Lees courageously took his concerns to Downing Street where he met with the Prime Minister to discuss the situation further. The meeting proved encouraging and led to Mr Brown calling for education ministers to liaise with local authorities to address the situation.

South Tyneside Council state that through their "Transforming Our Primary Schools and Building Schools for the Future" programmes, they are providing new school buildings which will be built to a high specification, although the new buildings will undoubtedly take years of preparation and construction to finalise.

For more information on this topic, please visit Mr Lees' website "Asbestos in Schools" <http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/default.htm>

Also see articles from our website:

<http://www.johnpickering.co.uk/news/2009/removal-of-asbestos-in-schools.html>

Dated 22 April 2009

<http://www.johnpickering.co.uk/news/2009/asbestos-in-schools1.html>

Dated 21 May 2009

<http://www.johnpickering.co.uk/news/2009/asbestos-in-schools.html>

Dated 25 March 2009

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Notes

[John Pickering and Partners LLP](#)- Specialist [mesothelioma compensation](#) solicitors.

We are a specialist personal injury law firm. We have been handling claims for industrial disease for over 30 years. Most of our work involves acting for asbestos disease victims.

We only act for the sufferers of asbestos diseases and never act for the organisations that caused the asbestos exposure or their insurers. We have an ethical approach and pledge to donate 10% of our net profits every year to good causes that help asbestos sufferers.

[Click here](#) to find out about our donations to good causes. We have also been involved in most of the landmark judgments that shape this area of law. Find out more [about us](#) or find out about [our reported cases](#). We are on the panels of several asbestos support groups and are ranked highly by legal guides. [Click here](#) to find out more about what others have said about us.

[John Pickering and Partners LLP](#) is a niche legal practice that has represented Claimants in the leading asbestos "test cases" in the last ten years. The firm represented Sylvia Barker in *Barker v Corus (UK) Plc*, a case that highlighted the

legal tactics of employers and insurers trying to cut back their compensation liabilities to mesothelioma sufferers, and which prompted the amendment of the Compensation Act 2006 to ensure full compensation for mesothelioma claims. The firm represented two of the three Claimants in the *Fairchild appeal*, in which the insurance industry tried unsuccessfully to block compensation altogether for mesothelioma sufferers unable to identify which of two or more sources of asbestos exposure had caused their illness.

The firm represented Alice Jefferson, a mesothelioma sufferer, whose illness and compensation claim against Cape Asbestos were featured in the important documentary "*Alice: A Fight For Life.*" Shown by Yorkshire Television in July 1982, the programme was an important catalyst for legal change and public awareness of the plight of mesothelioma and other asbestos disease sufferers and a prompt for important legal reform.

Mesothelioma is a type of cancer that affects the lining of certain bodily organs. It most commonly affects the lining of the lungs (the pleura) but it can affect other areas including organs in the abdominal cavity (the peritoneum).

According to the [British Lung Foundation](#), more than 2,000 people are diagnosed with mesothelioma every year in the UK and there is one mesothelioma death every five hours. The number of deaths from mesothelioma increased from 153 in 1968 to 1,969 in 2004 and is expected to peak at 2,450 between 2011 and 2015.

The [British Lung Foundation](#), supported by John Pickering and Partners LLP, launched the first Action Mesothelioma Day on 27th February 2006, to raise awareness about mesothelioma, to improve the treatment and care of mesothelioma patients, and to lobby for better funding for research into mesothelioma and for the protection and education of people working with asbestos.

If you need advice about an asbestos related illness, [contact us](#) now for information about making a claim for compensation.