

Northumberland company fined for illegal asbestos waste site

24.2.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

A company has been ordered to pay almost £10,000 for illegally storing asbestos waste in Northumberland in a prosecution brought by the Environment Agency.

Reddem Ltd, based at Queens Road, Wooler, appeared at Newcastle Magistrates' Court on Friday 13 February.

It pleaded guilty to one offence of operating an illegal waste site and another of keeping or treating waste in a way likely to cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health by storing waste containing asbestos in open containers.

It was fined £4,000, ordered to pay costs of £4,000 and a victim surcharge of £1,600.

The court heard that the demolition company was running an illegal waste site at The Old Gas Works Yard, at South Road in Wooler, bringing construction and demolition waste containing asbestos to the site before onward transportation for disposal.

Asbestos is a controlled waste and must be stored double-bagged in sealed containers. Skips used to store asbestos must also be kept enclosed, and it must not be transferred between different skips or containers.

The company had no environmental permit, which is required to carry out most waste activity.

Area Environment Manager Gary Wallace said:

Asbestos is a known serious health hazard and this company has shown a complete disregard for the impact this could have had on its workers and nearby residents.

Environmental permits are there to protect the environment and communities and we will take action against those who flout the law.

Waste crime scars out communities and will not be tolerated.

Image shows the asbestos waste on site

Skips on site contained asbestos

The court was told that the issue was first reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) by a local resident who had regularly seen waste with the appearance of asbestos being brought onto the site and bulked into large containers.

In June 2023, an HSE Inspector attended the site to gather evidence. They spoke to a director of the company, who confirmed that asbestos cement was being moved around the site.

On 23 June 2023 the inspector served a prohibition notice to the company relating to asbestos disturbance and explained the activity must stop.

The same day, Environment Agency officers attended and saw nine skips which appeared to contain asbestos.

They issued a letter telling the company to stop the activity, and a formal notice requiring the land not to be disturbed until an inspection had taken place.

A joint site inspection took place on 30 June 2023 involving the HSE and Environment Agency, during which samples of waste were taken for analysis from six skips. It was later confirmed that all of the samples contained asbestos.

The Environment Agency's investigation established that more than 40 tonnes of material containing asbestos was later removed to a properly permitted site for disposal.

The sentencing comes after Varun Datta, 36, from Little Chester Street, London, was last Friday, 13 February, ordered to hand over more than £1.4m for illegally dumping in excess of 4,275 tonnes of waste across England - including at a site in Middlesbrough.

People can report waste crime anonymously to the Environment Agency on 0800 807060 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Full charges

1.

Between 15 June 2022 and 12 July 2023 on land known as The Old Gasworks Yard, South Road, Wooler, did operate a regulated facility, namely a waste operation for the recovery or disposal of waste, except under and to the extent authorised by an environmental permit.

Contrary to Regulations 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

2.

Between 15 June 2022 and 12 July 2023 on land known as the Old Gasworks Yard, South Road, Wooler, did keep and/or treat controlled waste namely asbestos-containing materials in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health.

Contrary to Section 33(1)(c) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/northumberland-company-fined-for-illegal-asbestos-waste-site>