

# Italian Criminal Court Convicts Managers for Workers' Deaths from Asbestos



As we've noted before, criminal charges for serious safety incidents are rare. But they appear to be getting more common, at least on an international level.

For example, on July 15, 2015, a court in Italy convicted 11 former managers of the tire company Pirelli of manslaughter for the deaths of some 20 workers, who were exposed to asbestos. (Learn more about the hazards posed by this substance.)

The court sentenced the managers—including two ex-CEOs—to jail terms of up to seven years and eight months.

All eleven were Pirelli board members between 1979 and 1989 when workers were exposed to asbestos at the company's Milan factory. The workers died from tumours or lung disease that prosecutors said was linked to asbestos exposure.

And here in Canada, a project manager was recently convicted of criminal negligence for the deaths of four workers in the collapse of scaffolding on Christmas Eve.

Note that even though asbestos is no longer used in materials in most countries, it can still pose a threat to workers under certain circumstances, such as when renovating older buildings. That's why BC recently announced that WorkSafeBC prevention officers will be increasing inspections of residential demolition and renovation sites to ensure contractors are comply with OHS laws when identifying and removing asbestos.

And in May, Saskatchewan launched a new user-friendly and searchable online asbestos registry, which will let workers, employers and the general public easily search and find asbestos in public buildings across that province.

So if your workers are at risk of exposure to materials containing asbestos,

take steps to protect them from this hazardous substance.