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### **No link between cement dust and cancer**

A new report by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that a causal association between Portland cement exposure and cancer could not be established.

Commenting on the report, Mike Gilbert, Chief Executive of the British Cement Association (BCA) said: “Safeguarding the health of employees and those living near cement factories is of paramount importance to the UK cement industry and we are proud to say that in over 100 years of cement manufacturing, there is no history of ill-health associated with the industry.”

The report, *Portland Cement Dust*, updates findings from the earlier review of Portland cement (1994) by reviewing 15 recently published studies. It found that cancer mortality for cement workers was similar to the general population and to other industrial workers. A Health Protection Agency report in October 2004 came to the same conclusion by stating there is no history of ill-health arising from the activities of the cement industry, and that emissions from cement kilns show a negligible impact on public health.

Although evidence indicates that occupational exposure to cement dust has produced deficits in respiratory function, the current evidence can't establish the dose-response relationship for these effects.

“Naturally we are pleased that another independent and respected body confirmed our industry's own research findings. But there never has been a problem with our product and irritation in the mouth, throat and lungs can only occur if the correct safety precautions we advocate are not taken,” Mike Gilbert concluded.

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**For further information:**

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**Notes to editors:**

The British Cement Association (BCA) is the trade and research organisation that represents the interests of the United Kingdom's cement industry in its relations with Her Majesty's Government, the European Union and relevant organisations in the United Kingdom. The members of the BCA (Buxton Lime Industries, Castle Cement, Lafarge Cement UK and Rugby Cement) are the major domestic manufacturers of Portland cement producing over 90% of the cement sold in the UK.

The cement industry has an annual turnover of £750 million and is a major supplier to the construction industry. It employs around 3,500 people directly with a further 15,000 jobs depending upon its operations.