

Emma Bridgewater fined £266,666 after falling shard of glass injures child

- A 12-year-old girl was injured by falling glass at Christmas lights event in Hanley in 2024.
- A snow machine fell from a window above the gift shop where members of the public were gathered.
- Emma Bridgewater Ltd was found to have failed to secure snow machine installed above public area.

Ceramics manufacturer Emma Bridgewater has been handed a £266,666 fine after a young girl was injured by falling broken glass during a Christmas lights switch-on event at its premises in Hanley.

The sentence was imposed after a Health & Safety Executive investigation found the company had failed to properly secure a snow machine which fell from a window above.



The gift shop and window from which the snow machine fell.

On 23 November 2024, the 12-year-old victim attended an annual Christmas lights switch-on event with her family at the Emma Bridgewater gift shop in Hanley. During the event, an artificial snow machine, which was in a window opening above the gift shop, fell out of the building and to the ground below. The machine hit a light on the way, sending a shard of broken glass towards the girl's head, she suffered a deep cut which required hospital treatment.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Emma Bridgewater Limited had not properly assessed the risks associated with the use of the snow machine and had failed to ensure that it was properly secured to prevent it from falling out of the window, despite the manufacturer's instructions demonstrating clearly how to safely install it.



The snow machine.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require employers to ensure that suitable steps are taken to prevent the fall of any material or objects where there is a risk of injury to employees or members of the public.

At Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 30th January 2026, Emma Bridgewater Limited of Lichfield Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 10(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £266,666 and ordered to pay costs of £4931 along with a victim surcharge of £2000

Health & Safety Executive Inspector Rob Gidman said:

“What should have been a festive event was marred by haphazard planning which left a young girl needing hospital treatment.

“Had the positioning of the snow machine been properly planned and the machine itself been properly secured, this incident could have been avoided entirely – and it's fortunate the victim did not sustain more serious injuries.

“Christmas gatherings are a happy occasion, but it's vital organisers thoroughly assess the risks and put in place measures to minimise the risk of harm to the public.”

The HSE investigation was supported by Visiting Officer, Sarah Ough, and the prosecution was brought by enforcement lawyer Samantha Tiger.

Further Information

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here [Working at height: A brief guide](#).
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#).