

# Forging company fined over death of employee entangled in lathe

- Nick Hardiman, 54, died after becoming entangled in a lathe while using handheld emery cloth at Somers Forge Limited in Halesowen on 8 December 2023
- HSE found the company failed to prohibit dangerous working practices, prevent access to moving machinery parts, and establish safe operating procedures
- HSE guidance states emery cloth should never be applied directly by hand

A Halesowen forge has been fined £750,000 after an employee sustained fatal injuries when he became entangled in a 20-metre long lathe.

Nick Hardiman was employed by Somers Forge Limited as a machinist at their forge on Prospect Road, Halesowen.

On 8 December 2023, the 54-year-old from Kidderminster was working on a lathe in the machine shop. Whilst using handheld emery cloth to finish a rotating component, Mr Hardiman became entangled in the dangerous moving parts of the lathe, sustaining catastrophic injuries.

Despite the efforts of emergency services, Nick Hardiman sadly died later that evening.



Nick Hardiman

Mr Hardiman leaves behind his partner, Melanie; his siblings Robert, Glenis, Lorraine and David; and his parents Michael and Doreen.

Nick's siblings Robert, Glenis, Lorraine and David said: "We can't comprehend how someone can go to work and not come home again. Everyone is absolutely devastated."

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Somers Forge Limited had failed to:

- prohibit the use of handheld emery cloth on lathes
- prevent access to dangerous moving parts of the lathe
- ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) worn by workers did not create risk of being injured by, or drawn into, the lathe
- undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the lathe, or establish a safe operating procedure

HSE provides guidance on [using emery cloth on metalworking lathes](#). This guidance establishes that it is never acceptable to apply emery cloth by hand to a rotating component, as there is a risk of the operator becoming entangled or dragged into the danger zone.



Somers Forge Ltd

Somers Forge Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £750,000 and ordered to pay £38,314 in costs at Walsall Magistrates' Court on 18 February 2026.

Nick's partner Melanie said: "Nick had everything to live for – a loving home and a partner who adored him, family and friends, and a fulfilling life ahead of him. We used to have a life; now I just exist."

I will forever miss the sound of his voice, the smell of his aftershave, the feel of his cuddles and kisses, and the times we would spend together."

Nick's father Michael said: "We feel very proud when we speak about Nick, but it really hurts to talk. We think about Nick every single day."

**HSE Inspector Sophie Neale said:** "This was an entirely preventable incident which has had tragic consequences."

Employers must ensure that safe systems of work are in place and that workers are not exposed to foreseeable risks from dangerous machinery.

My thoughts are with Nick's family and friends."

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Chloe Ward, and paralegal officer Stephen Grabe.

## **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](#) are available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here [Using emery cloth on metalworking lathes – HSE](#)
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](#).

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## **Grounds maintenance company fined after employee killed operating ride-on lawnmower**

- Worker was killed when the ride-on mower he was operating ended up in village pond.
- HSE investigation found no suitable site-specific risk assessment had been carried out.
- Safety-critical roll-over protection system had been removed from the machine.

A grounds maintenance company has been fined after an employee was killed while operating a ride-on lawnmower near Ripon.



the lawnmower involved

Kamil Grygieniec, 23, from Northallerton, was cutting grass around a village pond in North Stainley on 8 October 2021 when the ride-on mower he was operating descended a steep incline and ended up in it.

The mower was being used without a safety-critical roll-over protection system (ROPS) fitted.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that MHS Countryside Management Limited had failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient site-specific risk assessment for the work being undertaken.

The investigation also established that the mower's roll-over protection system (ROPS) had been removed at some point prior to the work taking place. ROPS are designed to protect operators in the event of a machine overturning and are a critical safety feature when working on uneven or sloping ground.



where the incident took place

Suitable risk assessment is essential when operating ride-on machinery, particularly where there is a risk of overturning on slopes or near water. Employers must ensure equipment is appropriate for the terrain and fitted with necessary safety features to protect operators. Find out more on our website here [Risk assessment: Template and examples – HSE](#).

MHS Countryside Management Limited, of Bishop Auckland, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £27,000 and ordered to pay £11,166 in costs at York Magistrates' Court on the 17 February 2026.

### **Family tributes**

Kamil's mother and father said:

"The pain I feel every day since that tragedy is unimaginable, I do not wish that on anybody. That day I lost part of me.

"I will never be able to hug him, tell him how much I love him. I will never receive flowers from him, will never meet him wife or his children. Kamil was my physical and mental support.

"That day was his last day at that workplace and it happened to be the last day of his short life."

"I don't know what life holds for the future for me, but what I am certain of is it will not be as full or as happy now that Kamil has gone from our lives.

"What makes it even worse, I believe his death could have been prevented and should never have happened."

**After the hearing, HSE Inspector Darian Dundas said:**

"This is a profoundly tragic case which is made all the more harrowing because the safety feature designed to prevent incidents like this had been removed from the lawnmower – leading to the fatal turn of events which has robbed a family of their loved one.

"The completion of a suitable and sufficient site-specific risk assessment is vital before undertaking work activities and ensures appropriate action can be taken to eliminate hazards or, where this is not possible, to properly control the risks.

"In this case, the failure to assess the risks and ensure suitable safety measures were in place resulted in a tragic and entirely avoidable loss of life."

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Iain Jordan and supported by paralegal officer Stephen Grabe.

**Further information:**

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**Construction company fined after worker seriously injured in fall from**

# height in handbag factory renovation

- Worker suffered multiple serious injuries after falling from ladder during refurbishment project.
- HSE investigation found there was no safe system of work for working at height.
- Company had previously been served with a Prohibition Notice for unsafe work at height.

A construction company has been fined after a worker sustained serious injuries when he fell from a ladder during renovation works in London.

On 5 August 2021, the worker was engaged on a refurbishment project in Islington for Bow Tie Construction Limited. The project involved converting an existing domestic property and a former handbag factory into a single dwelling.

As part of the works, a new concrete staircase was to be installed between the ground and first floors. Temporary timber formwork was required to construct the staircase.

The worker, along with two others, had been instructed by company director and acting site manager Rafael Delimata to build the formwork. While standing on the top of a stepladder and using a gas-powered nail gun, the worker fell approximately 1.65 metres to the floor below.

He sustained multiple serious injuries, including crush injuries to both elbows requiring several surgeries, a fractured forearm, dislocated wrists, and injuries to his right leg and left knee.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Bow Tie Construction Limited had failed to implement a safe system of work for working at height during the construction of the staircase.

The investigation also identified wider failings in the management of work at height on site, including inadequate edge protection, incorrectly assembled tower scaffolds, staircases without edge protection, and uncontrolled use of ladders. These failings continued despite a previous HSE visit on 2 July 2021, during which a Prohibition Notice had been served for unsafe work at height.



Photo from the scene

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death. HSE has detailed guidance on how to plan and carry out work at height safely, including the importance of selecting appropriate equipment and ensuring suitable supervision. These can be found on our website: [Construction – Work at height – HSE](#).

Bow Tie Construction Limited, of Cliveden Office Village, Lancaster Road, High Wycombe, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay £4,101 in costs at Southwark Crown Court on 13 February 2026.

**HSE Inspector Emma Bitz said:**

“The risks associated with working at height are well known, and this incident could have easily been prevented.

“Employers must ensure suitable control measures are in place, safe working practices are followed, and workers are provided with appropriate supervision.

“Failure to do so can result in life-changing injuries, as this case clearly demonstrates.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz and paralegal officer Melissa Wardle.

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## **Man handed suspended sentence after illegal boiler replacement risks carbon monoxide leak**

- Poor work carried out deemed 'immediately dangerous' and put lives at risk
- Illegal boiler replacement could have resulted in carbon monoxide poisoning.
- All gas work must be carried out by registered person.

A man has been given a suspended prison sentence after he carried out dangerous and illegal gas work on a property in Bournemouth which could have resulted in carbon monoxide poisoning.

David McCallum, 58, trading as McCallum Plumbing & Heating, attended a property in the Dorset town in February 2023. Part of the work carried out saw McCallum relocating a gas boiler and flue. However, following its installation, the homeowners noticed problems with it and had concerns over the standard of the work that had been done.



Part of the work carried out saw McCallum relocating a gas boiler and flue

They arranged for another gas engineer to check the installation. When they arrived, they carried out an inspection and deemed the boiler to be 'immediately dangerous'. The gas boiler flue was not sealed or correctly positioned which meant that there was a risk of carbon monoxide leaking into the property.

The matter was reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and an investigation found that McCallum had no training in gas work and was not registered with the Gas Safe Register (GSR).

Carrying out gas work without registration is illegal and potentially dangerous, as unqualified work can lead to gas leaks, fires, explosions, and carbon monoxide poisoning.

McCallum knew he should have been registered with GSR to undertake the gas work, as he had previously been a director of a company that had been registered.



The gas boiler flue was not sealed or correctly positioned

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 require those undertaking gas work to be Gas Safe registered and to hold the relevant qualifications to demonstrate their competence.

Members of the public are reminded that all gas work must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Anyone can check whether an engineer is registered by visiting [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) or calling 0800 408 5500.

David McCallum of Balston Road, Parkstone, Poole, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 3(3), 27(1) and 27(5) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment, suspended for 12 months. He was also ordered to pay the homeowner compensation of £3,907 and £7,064 in costs at Bristol Magistrates' Court on 13 February 2026.

In addition to this, McCallum was given a six-month electronic monitoring order restricting his movements over the weekends.

**HSE inspector Simon Jones said:** “David McCallum undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do – and his shoddy work replacing the boiler and flue meant there was an immediate danger of carbon monoxide leaking into the property.

“McCallum’s illegal gas work put the lives of innocent homeowners at risk for his own financial gain.

“All gas work must be conducted by registered Gas Safe engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life. Installers will be prosecuted if they carry out gas work without the proper qualifications.

“I advise all householders to check that anyone they allow to work on the gas supply is gas safe registered. This can be done in just seconds.”

The prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer, Julian White, HSE advocate, Rowena Goodwin and Paralegal Farhat Basir.

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1. Guidance is available: The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. Relevant guidance can be found at [Gas Safety \(Installation and Use\) Regulations 1998 \(GSIUR\) as amended. Approved Code of Practice and guidance – HSE](#)

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## **Chemical company fined after agency worker suffers chemical burns**

- Flowchem UK Ltd fined £50,000 after worker suffered chemical burns from corrosive drain un-blocker
- HSE found inadequate training, PPE not routinely worn, and insufficient

first aid provisions

– HSE guidance is available

A manufacturer of household cleaning products in Nottingham has been fined after an agency worker suffered burns to her face, eye, neck and arm when she was doused in a corrosive sink and drain un-blocker.

Marzanna Sokolowska was working for Flowchem UK Ltd at its manufacturing site in Nottingham on 2nd November 2023 when she was doused with a significant quantity of corrosive liquid after accidentally opening the wrong valve on a 1,000 litre container.

Ms Sokolowska was working in a team decanting sink and drain un-blocker liquid from bulk containers at shoulder height into smaller containers for sale.

Ms Sokoloska accidentally opened the outlet valve on an adjacent container to the one fitted with a decanting hose, which had no end cap fitted. The liquid sprayed out under considerable force splashing her in the face and upper body.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the system of work employed by Flowchem exposed their employees and agency workers to health and safety risks in the event of leaks or losses of containment.

Training arrangements, including the provision of adequate information to workers with limited understanding of English was inadequate. Whilst some personal protective equipment (PPE) was provided by the company, it was routinely not worn, and there was inadequate supervision or monitoring to ensure the use of PPE.

Whilst eye-wash bottles were provided, the first aid arrangements available did not take account of the potential scale of any exposure, including the lack of a shower for example.

HSE guidance on the [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations \(COSHH\)](#) states that employers should identify the risks arising from the use of substances hazardous to health and put in place effective measures to prevent exposure and mitigate the consequences of any such exposure. These measures should include consideration of the systems of work under which the dangerous substances are handled, the training and supervision of those engaged in the work and the provision of adequate PPE and first aid arrangements.

Flowchem UK Ltd of Mark Street, Sandiacre, Nottingham NG10 5AD pleaded guilty to breaches of Section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £7,247.40 in costs with a victim surcharge of £2000 at Nottingham Magistrates Court on 12 February 2026.

**HSE Inspector, Angus Robbins, said:** "The systems of work employed by Flowchem

unnecessarily exposed workers to risks of injury from exposure to corrosive chemicals. More suitable working methods, including avoidance of decanting large volumes stored at or above head height could have been employed. Following the incident, Flowchem changed their working methods to eliminate these risks.

“Ms Sokolowska suffered very painful injuries and was unable to work for a considerable period. Of particular concern were the burns to her eyelid and eye. Fortunately, she has made a reasonable recovery and been able to return to work.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer, Andrew Siddall and paralegal officer, Farhat Basir.

#### **Further Information**

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3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here [COSHH basics: overview – COSHH](#)
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](#).