

Firm fined after worker injured when pipe fell into trench and struck him

An Essex company who are specialists in gas infrastructure have been fined after an employee suffered serious injury when a pipe fell into the trench he was working in and struck him.

Maidstone Crown Court heard how an employee of Forefront Utilities Limited had entered a trench in Rochester, Kent to connect gas pipes. The new pipes were rested on packing timber across the trench, but the weight caused the tarmac to give way. The pipe fell into the trench and struck the employee causing significant injury including a fractured spine. He is paralysed and has no feeling in his bowel.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident which occurred on 23 May 2014 found the method for jointing newly laid sections of pipe to previously laid pipe was unsafe.

Forefront Utilities Limited, of Stephenson Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, were found guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £56,686.

After the hearing HSE inspector Andrew Cousins said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working.

"If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

For further information on safety in construction visit:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/contractors.htm>

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

Engineering firm fined after worker crushed in machinery

Moy Park Ltd has been fined after a worker was injured at the company's site in Anwick near Sleaford, Lincolnshire

Lincoln Crown Court heard on the an engineer was checking the blades on the cutting line when the machine restarted and he wasn't able to move his hand away from the blade he was inspecting when the machine started up. The worker suffered deep laceration to his hand as a result of this incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to implement a safe system of work in relation to isolating procedures when maintaining the machinery in the production line.

Moy Park Ltd of Main Road, Anwick, Lincolnshire have pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and have been fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £11,924.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Principal Inspector David Butter said: "Duty holders must put measures in place to ensure there are safe procedures in place which are then followed when checking faults on machinery."

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Company fined after worker suffers hand injuries

PD Lift Services Limited has been fined £36,000 after a worker lost his thumb while working on passenger lifts in north London.

Westminster Magistrates Court heard how the worker was replacing the lifts at Tufnell Park underground station. On 26th October 2015, while lowering and guiding weights down the lift void, the load fell and amputated his thumb.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the lifting activity was not properly planned, or carried out safely. All four employees of PD Lifts were also exposed to serious work at height risks.

PD Lift Services Limited of Wimpole Street, London pleaded guilty, was fined £36,000 and was ordered to pay full costs of £1173.60, plus a victim surcharge of £120.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Sarah Robinson said: "This was a preventable incident which happened as a direct result of the failure of PD Lift Services Limited to plan the lifting operation, or carry it out safely."

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Bakers fined after workers suffer hand injuries

Penrith based bakery Bells of Lazonby Limited has been fined after two workers suffered hand injuries while operating machinery on site.

Carlisle Magistrates' Court heard that on the 26 January 2016 a worker lost the top of their right hand middle finger, after it caught the moving blade of a dough-dividing machine.

The second incident occurred on the 29 March 2016 when an employee's left index finger made contact with the cutting jaws of a wrapping machine.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to equip the machinery with the correcting guarding to avoid incidents like this occurring.

Bells of Lazonby Limited of Edenholme Bakery, Penrith have pleaded guilty to breaching two charges of Regulation 11, of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, and have been fined £40,000 for the first offence and £30,000 for the second offence and ordered to pay costs of £7990.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Leona Cameron said: "This case demonstrates the importance of checking and assessing all dangerous equipment and machinery to prevent injuries to employees operating such machinery."

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Manchester Hostel owners sentenced over asbestos failings

Two family run companies have been fined after admitting health and safety failings at a site in Manchester, where they were carrying out a basement conversion.

Manchester Crown Court heard how Hatters Taverns Limited had appointed sister company Hatters Hostel Limited as the main contractor for the basement conversion beneath a hostel at 50 Newton Street, Manchester.

The project involved the full strip out and refurbishment of the basement, a former restaurant unit, into a bar venue.

An unannounced visit by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) was conducted

to inspect the ongoing refurbishment works. During the visit it was discovered there had been no asbestos survey carried out before tradesmen started stripping out the majority of the space.

Hatters Taverns Limited of 50 Newton Street Manchester pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(3) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and was fined £10,000.

Hatters Hostel Limited of 56-60 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 5(a) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay the combined costs for both defendants of £10,232.50.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Matt Greenly said after the case: "Both Hatters Hostel and Hatters Taverns have failed in their duty to protect their workers, subcontractors and visitors to his site from harm. Asbestos related diseases are currently untreatable and claim the lives of an estimated 4000 people per year in the UK.

"The requirement to have a suitable asbestos survey is clear and well known throughout the construction industry. Only by knowing if asbestos is present in any building before works commence can a contractor ensure that people working on their site are not exposed to these deadly fibres.

"The cost of an asbestos survey is not great but the potential legacy facing anyone who worked on this site is immeasurable. Exposure to asbestos fibres can potentially cause life shortening diseases in the long term and Hatters Hostel Limited and Hatters Taverns Limited should have taken more care to protect workers from a totally preventable exposure. This case sends a clear message to any company that it does not pay to ignore well known risks on site."

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