

West Midlands timber yard fined after two workers struck by vehicle

A timber yard has been fined after two workers were seriously injured when they were struck by a side loader lift truck.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard how, on 23 February 2015, two employees of Palmer Timber Ltd were walking across the yard at the site in Cradley Heath when they were hit by a side loader lift truck. One worker suffered a fractured ankle while his co-worker suffered multiple serious injuries including a fractured eye socket and collar bone, a severed thumb, damage to his tongue, broken bones in his forearm, a broken rib and further injuries which required skin grafts.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found that the company did not have effective precautions in place for vehicles and pedestrians to move around safely.

Palmer Timber Ltd of Station Road, Cradley Heath pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4, by virtue of Regulation 17 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. The company was fined £730,000 and ordered to pay costs of £13,844.87 and a victim surcharge of £120.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Richard Littlefair commented: "This incident could have been much worse with the potential for fatal injuries. "There were reasonably practicable measures which should have been in place in order to allow vehicles and pedestrians to circulate in a safe manner."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. 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.