

[Builder fined for unsafe practice](#)

A builder has been fined after a worker lost a finger whilst cutting timber.

Brighton Magistrates' Court heard that on 7 August 2019, two men were cutting timber joists for the flat roof of a domestic extension. A builder was carrying out the cutting using a circular saw, whilst the worker was holding the timber. During cutting, the saw slipped, amputating the worker's index finger, severely damaging his middle finger and slicing open his thumb along its length. It was not possible to re-attach the amputated finger and the middle finger still has no movement or feeling. It is not known what, if any, movement will return following further operations. As a result of the injuries, the worker has lost 70 per cent of the grip in that hand and is still suffering from post-traumatic stress.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found that the work had not been properly planned and the risk of the saw blade coming into contact with the worker's hands had not been considered. The timber should have been secured to a workbench or similar so that no-one else was needed to assist whilst the saw was in use.

Benjamin Collier-Ware of Hailsham, East Sussex, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and was fined £1,969 with a victim surcharge of £181. He was also ordered to pay full costs of £3,940.20.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Stephen Green commented

"The worker's injuries are life changing. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices."

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>
4. Further information about health and safety in food and drink manufacturing can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg252.pdf>

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