

Demolition firm and director prosecuted after 20-year-old labourer crushed

A demolition firm has been fined and one of its directors ordered to do 250 hours of unpaid work after a 20-year-old worker was crushed.

Ace Demolition Services Ltd had been contracted by Southend Borough Council to demolish Futures Community College, in Southchurch Boulevard, Southend-on-Sea.

Shannon Brasier, who was 20 years old at the time, was working with a colleague to load a fuel hose into the rear compartment of a 21-tonne excavator, when the excavator moved round and crushed her between the excavator and a mobile fuel tank.

Ms Brasier, from Dagenham, suffered life-changing injuries, including to her neck, skull and face, which she was fortunate to survive.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Ace Demolition Services Ltd failed to implement suitable controls to segregate pedestrians and construction plant, allowed two pairs of keys to be used during the refuelling process and allowed operatives to act as signallers/banksman for the excavator without having received adequate training.

A director, John Gilligan, was responsible for supervising the refuelling and drove the excavator before the refuelling was complete.

The incident happened on 28 July 2020.

Ace Demolition Services Ltd and John Gilligan, of Fox Burrows Lane, Writtle, Chelmsford pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and 37(1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Ace Demolition Services Ltd was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £9,731 at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court on 24 November 2022. John Gilligan was given a 12-month community order with a requirement to undertake 250 hours of unpaid work.

HSE inspector David Tonge said: "This incident could have so easily been avoided. While there were a number of shortfalls, this incident ultimately occurred due a failure to keep the workers away from the excavator.

"Duty holders must ensure that individuals are segregated from vehicles and construction machinery."

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. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/ [The safe use of vehicles on construction sites HSG144 \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/schedule/1/para/1(1)(a)/made) <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg150.pdf>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>