

HSE calls on farmers to make safety a priority after a series of serious incidents

Britain's workplace regulator says more must be done to improve farm safety after being notified of four fatalities on farms in just over a fortnight.

Fatal incidents the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has become aware of include the death of a three-year-old boy in Wales and a suspected cattle-trampling in Chippenham earlier this week.

There has also been a report of a separate incident involving members of the public being attacked by cattle.

The incidents come just three weeks after Farm Safety Week, when HSE issued its [Fatal injuries in agriculture, forestry and fishing in Great Britain 2020/21](#) report highlighting the high fatality rate in the industry.

The figures showed that agriculture has the worst rate of fatal injuries of all the major industrial sectors, around 20 times higher than the average five-year annual rate across all industries.

HSE's acting head of agriculture Adrian Hodkinson said: "While we must respect the ongoing investigations following these tragic incidents, most injuries or deaths that we've historically seen on farms have been both predictable and preventable.

"Despite the efforts of the Farm Safety Partnership in particular, an industry-wide change in attitude is needed for farmers to take action to protect themselves and others to the well-known risks they face.

"At this time of year, we have additional factors such as the school holidays and higher numbers of members of the public enjoying the summer weather and walking along public footpaths through fields with cattle.

"But we ask that farmers, farm workers and farming contractors take the right steps to stop these incidents. At this time of year, it's important to manage risk from livestock and, with harvest well underway, to work safely with farm machinery.

He added: "The fatality rate within the sector is high, but there are simple measures workers can take to reduce risk including making sure to switch off the power to vehicles or machinery before attempting to carry out repairs, keeping people away from moving vehicles; and ensuring dairy bulls, and cows with calves are not in fields with public footpaths.

"We are urging people who work on farms to make safety a priority and help us to reduce the number of deaths and injuries in the industry."

Guidance in [managing livestock](#), [reducing the risks to children and the public](#), and [maintaining farm vehicles and machinery](#) is available on the HSE website.

Workers within the sector are also encouraged to seek help and advice from any of the Farm Safety Partnerships or leading farming organisations if they require guidance and support for specific tasks or activities.

Fatal incidents:

- Tuesday 27 July 2021: An investigation, led by Police Scotland with support from HSE, is ongoing after a man died in an apparent fall from height at a farm in Angus, Scotland.
- Tuesday 3 August 2021: An investigation, led by Dyfed Powys Police with support from HSE, is ongoing after a three-year-old boy died following a collision with a vehicle at a farm in Carmarthenshire, South Wales.
- Monday 9 August 2021: An investigation, led by Hampshire Police with support from HSE, is ongoing after a man died in a crushing incident involving a ramp falling from a truck at a farm in Hampshire.
- Tuesday 10 August 2021: An investigation, led by Avon and Somerset Police with support from HSE, is ongoing after a man was found with fatal injuries and surrounded by cattle at a field in Chippenham.

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.
2. The Fatal injuries in agriculture, forestry and fishing in Great Britain 2020/21 report highlights trends and provides summaries of each fatality involving employees, the self-employed and members of the public. The full report along with summaries of the circumstances of the individual fatal injuries can be read [here](#)
3. HSE continues to work with stakeholders across the farming and forestry sector to keep up the pressure to manage risk in the workplace to reduce the likelihood of serious injury, ill health and death. In relation to our response to Covid-19, this includes working with others e.g. public health authorities and government departments.
4. For information on how to stay healthy and safe in agriculture see HSE guidance [What a good farm looks like](#) and [Farmwise: Your essential guide to health and safety in agriculture](#).
5. Work related injuries must be reported to HSE by law. For information on the criteria for Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 visit: [\(RIDDOR\)](#)

The post [HSE calls on farmers to make safety a priority after a series of serious incidents](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Construction company fined after](#)

worker suffered life changing injuries

Hovington Limited was sentenced today for safety breaches after a worker was struck by a falling piece of plant machinery while working on a construction site in Rotherham.

Sheffield Magistrates' Court heard that, on 4 February 2019, groundworkers, including the injured person, were breaking out ground using a 13 tonne 360 excavator with a hydraulic breaker attached to an automatic quick hitch, as part of trench work to install new drainage of the site at Arconic Forging and Extrusions, Sheffield Road, Ickles, Rotherham. The breaker became detached from the quick hitch on the excavator. The breaker fell, narrowly missing one ground worker, and landed on the injured worker's right foot. He sustained injuries which led to amputation of his right leg below the knee.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to ensure that a safe method of work was in place when working in the vicinity of an excavator, there was no defined segregation between people and plant, and no use of a vehicle plant marshal to ensure the machine was isolated before pedestrians enter the working zone of the excavator. The company also failed to implement a dedicated bucket changing area for the changing of attachments to minimise the risk of attachments falling onto pedestrians.

Hovington Limited of Chichester Street, Rochdale pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £34,000 and ordered to pay £1,935.84 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Trisha Elvy commented: "This incident could have easily resulted in a fatality and could have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

"There should be suitable, defined safe systems of work so that persons who need to work in close proximity to excavators can do so safely."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)^[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]
4. Please see the link below to the page on HSE's website that is the best guide to doing it the right way:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/excavators.htm>

The post [Construction company fined after worker suffered life changing injuries](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Self-employed painter and decorator fined after employee falls through fragile roof](#)

A painter and decorator has been fined after an employee stepped off a working platform and fell two and a half metres through the fragile roof of a carport.

Aberdeen Sheriff Court heard that on 6 July 2018, sole trader Neil Beattie and an employee were undertaking the removal of a wasps' nest at a bungalow in Daviot, Oldmeldrum before painting the gable-end soffits above a carport. They climbed a ladder on to the roof and walked along a structural beam to stand on a working platform in the middle of the carport roof. When the wasps' nest was disturbed the employee stepped off the working platform and fell through the fragile, plastic roof of the carport. He sustained head and back injuries resulting in permanent disfigurement.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Neil Beattie Limited failed to ensure that the work at height was properly planned and so far as reasonably practicable, safe. His employee was required to walk across a fragile roof to access the working platform which was not fitted with appropriate edge protection.

Neil Beattie of Nether Davah Place, Inverurie, Aberdeen pleaded guilty to breaching the Regulation 4(1)(a) and (c) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £2,650.00.

Speaking after the hearing, "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height on fragile roofs are well known. If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

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 3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
 4. For guidance please visit [Fragile roofs: Safe working practices GEIS5](#) and [Health and Safety in Roofwork](#)

The post [Self-employed painter and decorator fined after employee falls through fragile roof](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Unregistered gas fitter fined for dangerous installation of range cooker at care home](#)

A fitter has been fined following a gas leak from a newly fitted range installed in a North Devon residential care home.

Exeter Crown Court heard that on 24 December 2020, Mark Whitham undertook the installation of the new gas range cooker after damaging the existing gas cooker whilst fitting out a new kitchen. Over the next 24 hours staff at the care home experienced problems with the operation of the cooker and contacted their usual Gas Safe Registered engineer. He found a substantial gas leak from the gas supply connection to the cooker.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Whitham was not registered with the Gas Safe Register. The manufacturer's installation paperwork that came with the appliance when purchased, made numerous references to correct installation by a qualified engineer and numerous references to compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, however these instructions were not followed.

Mark Whitham of Fallow Fields, Barnstaple Devon, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and Regulation 22(1)(a) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment for each offence, suspended for 12 months. He was also ordered to undertake 120 hours unpaid work and to pay £2,000 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Simon Jones said: "Mark Whitham undertook gas work, which he knew he was not registered to do. In this case Mark Whitham's unregistered gas work put the lives of vulnerable people at real risk from fire and explosion.

“All gas work must be carried out by Gas Safe registered engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life.”

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[Companies fined for inadequate guards on machinery](#)

Two sister companies based in Grantham, Lincolnshire that manufacture cardboard items, and a company that manufactures flat-bed die cutting (FBDC) machines have all been sentenced after a worker sustained serious injuries to his left hand.

Lincolnshire Magistrates’ Court heard that Postpack Limited and Damasco UK Limited of Hollis Road Grantham, manufacture cardboard items including packaging materials, flat pack boxes and toys. They purchased five FBDC machines from DIG Corrugated Machinery Ltd of Cullen Place, Eastlands Industrial Estate, Leiston. A worker using one of the supplied machines caught his hand under the rotating main roller and the fingers and thumb of his left hand were crushed, leading to their amputation.

An investigation carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the machine was supplied with inadequate guards to prevent access to its dangerous parts. Following the incident and service of Improvement Notices the guards were extended.

Postpack Limited xxADDRESSxx and Damasco UK Limited xxADDRESSxx pleaded guilty to contravening Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 The companies were fined £4000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,152 with a victim surcharge of £340.

DIG Corrugated Machinery Limited xxADDRESSxx pleaded guilty to breaching the duty under Section 6(1)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 The

company was fined £6500 and ordered to pay costs of £3529.20 with a victim surcharge of £170.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Mr Martin Giles commented:

“Those supplying machinery have a duty to ensure that it is safe. Purchasers and users of machinery must assess the equipment that they purchase and ensure that it is adequately guarded and that they have appropriate safe systems of work in place.

“If the flat-bed die cutter had been adequately guarded, then the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have easily been prevented.”

There is guidance to help companies assess the safety of machines on HSE’s website at www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/safety.htm

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