

# Sawmill firm sentenced after serious hand injury

A company has been sentenced after a worker was seriously injured when his hand came into contact with a rotating bandsaw blade.

Blackpool Magistrates' court heard how on 18 April 2019, the employee was working on a multi-head bandsaw machine at P Irving & Sons Ltd sawmill in Carnforth, when the pipes supplying cooling fluid to one of the six band-saw blades became blocked.

The machine had already been stopped several times that morning to replace damaged blades. An engineer was called to fix the issue and the employee assumed the problem had been rectified.

Rather than stopping the machine a further time, the employee pulled apart the base of the cabinet, creating a gap large enough to place his hand inside. Holding a torch to see what was causing the blockage, the employee put his hand inside the gap.

There was no interlock or sensor to this part of the housing to stop the machine, and the sensor to the top of the housing failed to activate, so the machine continued.

The rotating blade caught the back of the employee's right hand severing the tendons. He has undergone several operations since the incident and is still unable to bend his fingers and cannot grip, write or hold objects. He is awaiting further surgery.

A HSE investigation found there were insufficient measures in place to stop the blade rotating when the cabinet housing was opened. Measures to prevent access to the dangerous rotating blade, such as fixed and interlocked guarding, had not been taken so far as was practicable. This meant the cabinet housing could be opened with the blade still turning and ultimately led to an employee sustaining a significant injury.

P Irving & Sons Ltd of The Sawmills, Hutton Roof, Carnforth pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. They were fined £60,000 and ordered to pay costs of £20,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Leona Cameron said: "The risk of serious injury to employees operating this machine had existed for some considerable time.

"This injury could have been easily prevented, if the risk had been identified.

"Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery."



Multi-head bandsaw at P  
Irving & Son

**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](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## [Precision tool manufacturer fined after worker severs finger](#)

L.S. Starrett Company Limited, a precision tool manufacturer, has been fined after an employee's index finger was severed and his thumb deeply lacerated in an incident involving a radial arm drilling machine.

Jedburgh Sheriff Court heard that on 2 October 2018, the hole saw operator was using a radial arm drilling machine when his glove became entangled, resulting in the injuries.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) issued two improvement notices to the company following the incident for failing to provide employees with appropriate training on the use of the radial arm drill and failing to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the drill. This should have included informing employees not to wear gloves when using this type of machinery.

L.S. Starrett Company Limited of Oxnam Road, Jedburgh, Scotland pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £100,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Kim Ross commented: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out the correct control measures and safe working practices.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. For further guidance on Health and Safety in engineering workshops, please go to: [Health and safety in engineering workshops – HSG129 \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://hse.gov.uk/hsg129)

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## **[Property developer sentenced following excavation collapse](#)**

The sole director of a Norfolk based property development firm has been

sentenced for the unsafe excavation of land beneath occupied properties.

Norwich Crown Court heard how Lyng Developers Ltd was contracted to excavate a disused railway track, carrying out the work between November and December 2017 to make space for a development of five new properties in Great Eastern Way, Fakenham. The company failed to take measures to prevent the collapse of the excavated walls, which began to gradually crumble at the beginning of 2018.

Although no one was injured as a result of the unsafe work, the tops of the excavated banks were joined with the back gardens of existing properties. The collapse led to substantial loss of property and exposed elderly residents and children to the risk of becoming buried by the collapsing walls.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the job was not planned properly and carried out using only an excavator and two dump trucks. No safe system of work was followed, and no structures were put in place to support the risk of collapse. In addition, the company failed to fully cooperate with the HSE during the investigation and did not remedy the collapsed banks.

Director of Lyng Developers Ltd Timothy Peter Wegg of The Broadway, Scarning, Norfolk pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He has been sentenced to four months in prison suspended for 15 months and ordered to carry out 120 hours of unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay compensation of £12,000 to a member of public who lost property due to collapse and pay costs of £12,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Kasia Urbaniak said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply assessing the risk from working with large and complex excavations and then implementing control measures and safe working practices that are well-known in the construction industry. There is freely available HSE guidance on how to work safely with excavations.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards and irrespective of whether injury has arisen."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/excavations.htm>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## [Company fined after putting workers at risk of a fall from height](#)

A roofing contractor has been fined after a health and safety inspector came across two workers jet washing a steeply pitched roof on a house without adequate protection.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard that on 5 December 2019, a HSE inspector observed the employees of Improvearoom LLP on the roof of a detached property in Hale Barns using two powerful jet washers unsafely; and without any means of fall protection such as scaffolding or harnesses. The inspector issued a prohibition notice and the work was stopped until suitable measures were put in place.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that poor planning from management led to the failure of the erection of scaffolding prior to the work being carried out.

Improvearoom LLP of Macclesfield Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 4(1) and 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £20,000, ordered to pay costs of £2,981.20 and a victim surcharge of £180.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Phil Redman said: "Although the two workers should have raised concerns immediately with site management regarding the lack of scaffolding, it was the responsibility of the company to manage the job safely.

"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 are well known. Companies should be aware that unsafe work at height without suitable and sufficient controls in place is not acceptable and HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>
3. More information regarding safe working at height can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/workingatheight.htm>
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## [HSE-hosted UK Transition chemicals podcast](#)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is hosting a series of free podcasts to help businesses that make, use or supply chemicals understand what actions they need to take to ensure they are prepared for the end of the UK Transition period, when independent GB chemical regimes will be in place from 1 January 2021.

The 'After UK Transition: Working with Chemicals' podcast is now available from all major podcast platforms. To find it, just search 'The HSE Podcast' on your chosen platform. Audiences can also register to receive notifications for each episode released using [this link](#).

Each episode focuses on a different chemicals regime, including Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR), Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) and Prior Informed Consent (PIC) regimes, Plant Protection Products (PPP) and Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals (REACH).

The series will be centred around business readiness for Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), ensuring audiences are well informed of the duties and obligations needed to comply with to access the GB market after the transition period ends.

Throughout the series, we will be joined by industry voices and experts from both HSE and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to address the key changes to legislation and providing information on the actions required before or from 1 January 2021.

Dr Matthew Penrose, HSE's Head of Chemicals (Future Readiness) Policy, said: "The planned series of podcasts are intended to advise and inform anyone who may work with or use chemicals in their day-to-day line of business of the actions they need to take at the end of the UK Transition period.

"It could be a bigger company that produces chemicals or even a smaller business such as a metal fabricator that imports specialist powder coating products from the EU – either way they'll be affected when independent GB chemicals regimes start.

"The podcasts complement information that is already available through the HSE website, bringing them to life in a more personal format to suit the needs of the digital age HSE want to provide as much information as possible on the changes to chemicals regulations that will come into place on 1 January 2021.

"Our experts provide insights and answer questions raised by industry voices covering all five chemicals regimes, which should help any business prepare for the end of the UK Transition.

"It is imperative that businesses and individuals who make, use or supply chemicals prepare for 1 Jan. If they don't, they could face issues with products they use in everyday work."

The first episode, focusing on Plant Protection Products (PPP/pesticides), is available to stream or download now.

Further details regarding how to prepare your business for the end of the UK Transition can be found via the [HSE site](#) and [DEFRA site](#).

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