

Worktops firm fined after repeated failures to protect employees

A Stockport-based stone worktop manufacturer has been fined £26,000 for repeatedly putting its workers at risk.

Granite & Marble Shop Ltd failed to implement safe working practices despite warnings from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The company consistently put their employees at risk from serious injury by failing to adequately guard dangerous machinery at their site in Roland Road, Reddish.



There was no interlock guard on the sliding doors meaning they could be opened while the machine was in operation

A HSE inspector visited the site in 2019 and enforcement action was taken to have the appropriate guards installed, and to introduce daily checks, to ensure these were in place and functioning correctly.

HSE guidance is available about the importance for employers to consider [how their workers use machinery](#) and to have adequate arrangements in place to ensure it remains safe to use.

However, when an inspector returned to the site on 18 August 2021, the guarding measures that had been put in place were broken or disabled – once again placing employees in danger.

A HSE investigation found that The Granite & Marble Shop Ltd of Cheadle Place Stockport Road, Cheadle, Cheshire, had failed to properly manage, supervise, and monitor the control measures that had been put in place, in order to

ensure that guards were being used as intended.



The interlock guard on the sliding doors wasn't working

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and were fined £26,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,708 at a hearing in Manchester Magistrates' Court on 31 January 2024. The prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Sam Crockett.

After the hearing HSE Inspector Stephanie Simcock said: "This case highlights how critical it is that all employers make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.

"Machinery safety and supervision and monitoring is a must. We will prosecute if repeated breaches are found, regardless of whether there has been an incident.

"Despite an earlier intervention and advice being given, this company continued to fail in its duty to protect its employees."

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. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. Guidance on [working safely with machinery](#) is available.

[Textiles firm fined £60,000 after worker's arm dragged into machine](#)

A textiles company has been fined £60,000 after a man broke his arm when it was dragged into machinery at a site near Chorley.

The employee, a man from Blackrod in Greater Manchester, suffered serious injuries to his right arm in the incident at the factory operated by Pin Croft Dyeing and Printing Co. Limited in Market Street, Adlington, on 20 June 2022.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the man had been operating a large fabric spooling machine when a brake malfunctioned. During his attempt to manually slow the rotation of the machine, his sleeve became caught up with an exposed grooved spindle and his right arm was drawn into the mechanism. It became twisted by the rotation of the machine which broke both major bones in the forearm and caused serious tissue damage.



The man had been operating a large fabric spooling machine when a brake malfunctioned and his sleeve was caught in a grooved spindle

HSE guidance is available [how important it is for employers to consider how their workers use machinery](#) and to have adequate arrangements in place to ensure it remains safe to use.

Despite the company being aware of the risk posed by the moving spindle, they failed to either remove or suitably guard this part of the machinery.

As a result of his injuries, the man, who was right-handed, spent four nights in hospital and was unable to return to work for six months.

Preston Magistrates Court heard that Pin Croft Dyeing and Printing Co.

Limited of Adlington Works, Market Street, Adlington, Lancashire had neither guarded nor removed the exposed grooved spindle despite being aware of the risk it posed to employees.



During his attempt to manually slow the rotation of the machine, his sleeve became caught up with an exposed grooved spindle

The company pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. They were fined £60,000 and was ordered to pay £2.147 costs at a hearing at Preston Magistrates Court on 31 January 2024.

After the hearing, HSE inspector David Bellis said: “This man’s injuries were serious but they could have been much worse. The whole incident and its consequences could have been avoided if basic safeguards had been put in place.

“At HSE we would like highlight that all employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.”

The prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Chloe Ward.

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[Recycling company fined after worker killed by loading shovel](#)



Ward recycling site in Hartlepool

A recycling company has been fined £2.15million after an agency worker was killed by a loading shovel at its site in Hartlepool.

Dean Atkinson lost his life when he was struck and run over by the vehicle at Ward Recycling Limited's premises on Windermere Road, Longhill Industrial Estate in January 2020.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector Stephen Garner said Mr Atkinson's death could have been prevented had Ward Recycling implemented an alternative traffic route for pedestrians at its site on Windermere Road.

Simple measures like providing suitable separation between pedestrians and vehicles are set out in HSE [guidance on workplace transport](#).

Mr Atkinson, 32, had been returning from the site's welfare cabins to his workstation on the picking line.

To do so, he needed to walk across a traffic area at the site where mobile plant, including two loading shovels, operated.

One of the loading shovels struck and killed Mr Atkinson when he was walking in the traffic area.

Mr Atkinson's death prompted investigations from HSE and Cleveland Police with Ward Recycling later being prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The company was found guilty to committing corporate manslaughter and breaching health and safety regulations after a trial at Middlesbrough Crown Court last month.

The HSE investigation into the incident found Ward Recycling, which went into liquidation in 2021, failed to protect pedestrians from the mobile plant operations it was carrying out at the site. There were no suitable traffic management arrangements in place, meaning pedestrians were at risk of being struck by moving vehicles, including loading shovels. Loading shovels are particularly dangerous if adequate segregation is not in place, in part due to the limitations to the operator's visibility around the machine – a HSE visibility assessment found that an area over 10 metres in front of the vehicle could be obscured from the driver's view.

Ward Recycling Limited, formerly of St Peter's Square, Oxford Street, Manchester, was found guilty of breaching Section 1 of the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £1.75m for corporate manslaughter and £400,000 for breaching health and safety regulations at Middlesbrough Crown Court on 26 January 2024.

HSE inspector Stephen Garner said: "This tragic incident could easily have been avoided if Ward Recycling had implemented simple control measures.

"Following the incident, it took the company less than a week to put in place an alternative traffic route to protect pedestrians.

"Had this been in place before the incident, Dean Atkinson would not have lost his life. Sadly, pedestrians being struck by vehicles on waste sites has caused many fatal accidents on waste sites and the industry should be well aware of the risks."

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 2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
 3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
 4. The yellow line on the attached image shows the route pedestrians took from the welfare cabins to the picking line. The red line shows the loading shovel route.
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Manufacturing company fined £15,000 for wood dust failures

A manufacturing company has been fined £15,000 after exposing its own workers to wood dust and failing to comply with two improvement notices.

Wood dust can cause serious and often irreversible health problems, including sino-nasal cancer, asthma and dermatitis. Employers have a legal responsibility to prevent or adequately control exposure in the workplace.

After concerns were raised to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), inspectors from the workplace regulator went to Billy Davidson NV Stables Limited's premises in Wingate, Durham on 17 June 2022. As a result, notices were served on the firm requiring it to undertake an examination of the local exhaust ventilation (LEV) system fitted to a chop saw and for failing to control exposure to wood dust from the use of a circular table saw.

Proper dust extraction can include having the right machinery, and vacuuming dust instead of sweeping is often required. HSE's easy-to-follow guidance can be found [here](#).

Despite the action taken by HSE, when inspectors returned to the site on 12 January 2023, the circular saw was still being used, despite the company saying it had been taken out of use. Likewise, the chop saw and LEV was also still being used, and the company had not provided HSE with confirmation it had been examined and was adequately controlling wood dust exposure.

The subsequent HSE investigation found the company had shown a disregard for health and safety due to their failure to comply with the improvement notices.

A HSE campaign to [protect workers from exposure to wood dust](#) is ongoing.

Billy Davidson NV Stables Limited was found guilty of contravening two counts of Section 33(1)(g) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and Regulations 9(2) and 7(1) of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. The company was fined £15,000 and ordered to pay £4,500 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Clare Maltby said: "This company showed a blatant disregard to the safety of its own workers.

"Companies are responsible for controlling the exposure to wood dust, a substance which is hazardous to health and can cause long term health effects such as occupational asthma.

"Compliance could have been achieved by simply getting a LEV fitted to the circular table saw and getting a competent person to undertake a thorough examination and test of the LEV on the chop saw.

“This case demonstrates that we will not hesitate to prosecute companies who fail to comply with the law.”

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[Company director avoids prison over wood dust failures](#)

The director of a Norwich woodworking company has avoided an immediate spell behind bars after he exposed his employees to harmful wood dust.

Wood dust can cause serious and often irreversible health problems, including sino-nasal cancer, asthma and dermatitis. Employers have a legal responsibility to prevent or adequately control exposure in the workplace.

John Risby, the director of Turners and Moore Limited, was given a four month custodial sentence, suspended for two years, at Norwich Magistrates Court. The 33-year-old’s company was also fined £40,000.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out an inspection at the firm’s Hurricane Way site on November 2017, which identified significant failings in its measures to control exposure of employees to wood dust. Enforcement action was taken, however a subsequent inspection in August 2022 showed the company had failed to maintain standards and further enforcement action was taken.

Dust extraction and vacuuming instead of sweeping can be some of the measures taken to control exposure to workers. Guidance on working in the [woodworking industry](#) is available and an [inspection-led campaign to protect workers continues](#).

Turners and Moore Limited of Hurricane Way, Norwich was fined £40,000 after pleading guilty to breaches of Sections 2 (1) and 3 (1) of the Health and

Safety at Work Act 1974. The company must also pay £2,000 in costs. Director John Risby was given a four month custodial sentence, suspended for two years. He will also pay costs of £1,100 for breaching section 37 of the same Act.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Natalie Prince said: "This outcome should send a strong message out to anyone with a responsibility for protecting workers.

"Exposure to wood dust can cause serious ongoing health problems and businesses must do all that they can to protect their workers.

"This outcome should underline to those in the woodworking industry that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to protect the health of employees extremely seriously and will not hesitate to take action against companies that fail to do so."

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Gemma Zakrzewski and paralegal officer Sarah Thomas.

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