

Landscaping company fined after worker suffers head injuries

A company specialising in landscaping and garden machinery has been fined following an incident where a worker suffered head injuries on site at a school in Cromer, Norfolk.

Peterborough Magistrates' Court heard that, on 8 August 2018, Jeremy Buck suffered multiple fractures to the side of his face when his head became trapped between an excavator's bucket and a gate post. Mr Buck had been watching to ensure the machine did not hit the nearby fence when pushing soil but became trapped when he was facing away from the approaching excavator.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Garden Discount Centre Limited /trading as GDC Ltd, from St Olaves, Great Yarmouth, failed to assess the risks of the task and implement safety measures. Furthermore, no specific training for banking or operating excavators was given to employees, including the injured man and the excavator driver. Employees were not instructed on safe working practices with or near moving site plant.

Garden Discount Centre Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,745.50.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Kasia Urbaniak said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply assessing the risks of the task at hand, implementing suitable safety measures and issuing relevant safety instructions to employees.

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

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>

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