

# Ten HSE stories you might have missed this summer

It has been a busy start to the summer for HSE with many prosecutions throughout June and July.

Here are **TEN** prosecution cases you might have missed during that time:

## **Tata Chemicals fined following young father's death**

On 5 June, Tata Chemicals Europe Limited was fined more than £1 million at Chester Crown Court.

The case was brought against the firm following the death of a young father who died while erecting a scaffold tower in a chemical plant in Northwich.

Michael Densmore, from Halewood in Merseyside, died following complications to the wound he sustained after his right foot slipped into a trough containing a liquid chemical calcium hydroxide – more commonly known as 'milk of lime' – causing chemical and thermal burns.



Michael alongside his sons Billy and Mikey

The 37-year-old father-of-four was one of a number of scaffolders employed by Altrad NSG to erect scaffolding at Tata's Lostock Hall site.

On 30 November 2016, during the course of this work, Mr Densmore stepped over a trough which contained milk of lime – which had been heated to approximately 90 degrees centigrade. His right foot slipped on an unfastened lid covering the trough, resulting in him sustaining chemical and thermal burns to his foot and ankle.

You can read the full story here: [Tata Chemicals fined following young](#)

[father's death | HSE Media Centre.](#)

### **Openreach fined following death of engineer**

Telecommunications giant Openreach was given a £1.34 million fine after an engineer died while trying to repair a telephone line in Wales.

Alun Owen, from Bethesda, died after he slipped and fell into the River Aber in Abergwyngregyn and was swept away on 6 October 2020.

A joint investigation by HSE and North Wales Police found that a number of Openreach engineers had been attempting to repair the telephone lines, which ran across the river, over a period of two months. They had been working both near and in the river. At the time of the incident, there had been flooding in the area which meant the river was much higher and faster flowing than usual.



Alun Owen

Mr Owen, 32, entered the water and made his way to an island in the middle of the river in order to try and throw a new telephone cable across to the other side by taping it to a hammer and then throwing the hammer. As he attempted to cross the remaining section of the river, he slipped in a deeper part and the force of the river swept him away.

He was described by his family as a 'loving and selfless character'.

You can read more on this story here: [Openreach fined following death of engineer | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Construction company fined £2.345m after worker drowned in river**

Construction company BAM Nuttall Ltd was fined following the death of worker Gary Webster, who lost his life two days after drowning in the River Aire on 30 October 2017.

Mr Webster and another worker had been on a boat removing debris at the bottom of the weir gates at Knostrop Weir when it capsized. The boat had been pulled into turbulent water, caused by the considerable flow of water flowing over the top of the weir.

The 60-year-old was repeatedly pulled under the water and was eventually recovered by a diver 14 minutes later. The other worker managed to swim to

safety.

Mr Webster was pronounced dead on 1 November 2017 at Leeds General Infirmary.

You can read more about this case here: [Construction company fined £2.345m after worker drowned in river | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Housing company fined after worker killed by concrete blocks**

On 19 June, Avant Homes (Scotland) Ltd was fined more than £300,000 after a driver was crushed to death by falling concrete blocks at a construction site in South Lanarkshire.

Conor Joseph Morgan had been delivering materials to Shott Farm in High Blantyre, a construction site being operated by the firm, when the incident happened on 19 April 2017.

The 45-year-old, who was employed as a HGV driver for Regen Waste Limited, was crushed as the concrete blocks were being unloaded from the articulated flatbed trailer using an excavator with pallet fork attachment. However, the length of the pallet forks fitted to the excavator exceeded the width of the pallet being unloaded.

As the pallet was being lifted the forks caught a second pallet of concrete blocks causing them to topple from the edge of the trailer and onto Mr Morgan.

You can read more about this case here: [Housing company fined after worker killed by concrete blocks | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Livestock auctioneers fined after man, 75, killed by cow**

Llanelli Magistrates fined the operators of a livestock market on 20 June after a cow being auctioned managed to escape and kill a pensioner.

Father-of-two Huw Evans was knocked down and trampled by the cow in the Welsh town of Whitland on 19 November 2022.



Huw Evans

A worker at J.J. Morris Limited was also injured in an unsuccessful attempt to capture the cow, which later ran towards Whitland Rugby Club and a railway line before being captured and put down by Dyfed-Powys Police.

You can read more about this story here: [Livestock auctioneers fined after man, 75, killed by cow | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Charitable trust fined following death of volunteer**

Wilts & Berks Canal Trust was fined £30,000 after 62-year-old volunteer was killed while carrying out restoration work on 24 August 2016.

Peter Konitzer was fatally crushed when a section of a wall collapsed onto him in an excavation at Pewsham locks. He had been inside the excavation removing temporary propping that was supporting the wall when a section of it collapsed.



A section of the wall collapsed while Mr

Konitzer was inside  
the excavation

The trust had been carrying out the restoration work as part of its project to preserve, conserve and improve the route of the Wilts and Berks Canal. However, it failed to ensure the safety of its volunteers working on it.

A joint HSE and Wiltshire Police investigation found the temporary propping to be inadequate and there was no clear method for the safe installation or removal of props during the work.

You can read the full press release here: [Charitable trust fined following death of volunteer | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Explosives manufacturer fined £670,000 after worker dies**

At a hearing at Swindon Magistrates' Court on 27 June, a manufacturer of military explosives was fined following the death of a 29-year-old.

Piotr Zukowski was killed in an explosion at a factory in Salisbury being operated by Chemring Countermeasures Limited. Another man was seriously injured following the blast on 10 August 2018.



Piotr Zukowski was killed following an explosion in 2018

The pair had been cleaning a vessel used in the production of MTV – an explosive substance used in military flares.

Piotr's mother Elżbieta, said her life 'stopped' on the day her son was killed.

You can read more about this story here: [Explosives manufacturer fined £670,000 after worker dies | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Engineering firm fined after employee sustains serious injuries at HS2 site**

On 15 July, St Albans Magistrates fined an engineering firm after a worker sustained multiple injuries while working at a HS2 construction site in Hertfordshire.

The mechanical engineer had been employed by EMC Elite Engineering Services Ltd when he fell more than 30 feet on 20 November 2022.

The man, who was 57 at the time, fell through a gap in a conveyor's stairway and landed on the concrete floor below. He sustained a fractured pelvis, skull, hip, jaw and two broken wrists.

He spent two months in hospital following the incident, undergoing surgery requiring him to have six plates inserted into his face.



A still of the CCTV which captured the moment the man fell

You can read more about this prosecution here: [Engineering firm fined after employee sustains serious injuries at HS2 site | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **£240,000 fine for company after fall left man paralysed**

A Cheshire-based electrical transmission company was fined more than £200,000 after a man was left paralysed following a fall from height.

North Wales man Gavin Pugh had been demolishing and replacing electricity pylons in East Staffordshire when the incident happened on 6 April 2022.



Gavin Pugh fell more than

30 feet during work to  
demolish electricity  
pylons in East  
Staffordshire

Birmingham Magistrates Court heard how Mr Pugh and his colleagues were unaware of previous work already undertaken to loosen bolts on the tower. This caused him to fall more than 30 feet.

He spent six months in hospital and has been left unable to work as a result of his extensive injuries.

You can read the full story here: [£240,000 fine for company after fall left man paralysed | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Recycling company fined £3m after one man died and another seriously injured**

A national recycling firm was fined £3 million after one man died and another was seriously injured as they decommissioned an old North Sea gas rig.

Stephen Picken, 62, and Mark Kumar were working for Veolia ES (UK) Limited at an onshore facility in Great Yarmouth when the incident happened on 17 October 2019.

The pair had been removing an overhanging piece of metal pipework (known as a skirt pile), weighing in excess of 27 tonnes, from a jacket (a structure placed in the sea, designed to support oil and gas rig platforms), when it gave way. The pile struck the mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) containing the men, throwing them to the ground about 12 metres below.



The aftermath of the incident in Great Yarmouth.

Mr Picken died at the scene and Mr Kumar suffered serious life-changing injuries.

A HSE investigation identified serious failures including shortcomings in terms of supervision.

You can read more about this case here: [Recycling company fined £3m after one man died and another seriously injured | HSE Media Centre](#)