

# Wine company fined £800k after HGV driver killed at Salford depot

A wine and drinks supplier has been fined after a visiting HGV driver was killed after being hit by a forklift truck at its depot in Salford.

John Fitzpatrick was waiting for his trailer to be loaded at Kingsland Drinks Ltd in Irlam on 19 August 2020 when tragedy struck. The 59-year-old, from Oldham, suffered serious head injuries in the incident and died in hospital having never regained consciousness.



A still from the CCTV at the Kingsland Drinks depot in Irlam (HSE)

In a victim personal statement read out at Manchester Magistrates Court, his partner Paula Fitzpatrick, said how his death had affected their family.

“I cannot really explain what we have lost without describing the kind of person John was,” she said.

“John was a joyful character, full of life, and often described as the life and soul of the party.

“He would talk to anyone and I would often lose him for a couple of hours when he went to the local shop as he would be talking to all the neighbours on the way.

“He was that kind of person – a very hardworking man who would do all the DIY around the house and that included all the family’s odd-jobs.

“At the time of his death, we were planning how our future would look.”

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed in a number of areas. The risk assessment was out of date and not fit for purpose, and there was no pedestrian and [vehicle segregation in place in the loading area](#). Visiting drivers were not given clear information about site safety.

At a sentencing hearing at Manchester Magistrates’ Court on 25 January,

Kingsland Drinks Ltd of The Winery, Fairhills Road, Irlam, Manchester, pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. They were fined £800,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,614.30.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Sharon Butler said: "This death would have been prevented if clear controls had been in place for visiting drivers.

"Companies who have loading areas need to provide information and instructions to visiting drivers and have clear segregation in place to ensure the site is safe for all who use it.

"Easy steps can be taken to reduce the risk of visiting drivers becoming injured on site."

#### **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.
1. Full guidance on [workplace transport](#) is available.