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Pallet manufacturer sentenced after worker struck by fork lift truck

A Cheshire-based woodworking company has been sentenced after a worker was struck by a fork lift truck (FLT) at Woodford Park Industrial Estate, Winsford.

Manchester and Salford Magistrates' Court heard how, on 27 March 2017, an employee of Mid Cheshire Pallets Ltd was carrying a pallet across the workshop when he was struck by an FLT being driven by another employee. The worker suffered serious fractures to his leg and ankle in the incident and was off work for several months.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found there was inadequate segregation of fork lift trucks and pedestrians within the work-space. A risk assessment had been carried out but had not highlighted the importance of marking segregation areas.

Mid Cheshire Pallets Ltd of Leslie Road, Woodford Park Industrial Estate, Winsford pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) and Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and has been fined £6,500 and ordered to pay costs of £7,362.58.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Jane Carroll said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to provide safe methods of working and a safe working environment. If a suitable system of work had been in place the injuries sustained by this employee could have been prevented."

Tadcaster company fined after worker struck by telehandler load

A potato processing company has today been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker, Colin Smith, was struck by a telehandler load.

Leeds Magistrates' Court heard how, on 5 January 2018, Mr Smith, aged 62, was walking across the middle yard to the maintenance workshop when he was struck by three potato boxes loaded on the tines of a telehandler being operated by another employee. The impact knocked him to the ground and caused a fracture to his left leg.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had insufficient measures in place to prevent people being struck by a

vehicle and that a protected walkway was provided to only two sides of the yard, but not to the right side between the production sheds and the engineers workshop, a well-used pedestrian route. The investigation also found a large number of boxes had been stored in the yard which meant there was less room resulting in pedestrians, including Mr. Smith, having to take a route further into the transport area than was necessary.

The company also failed to ensure forklift truck and telehandler operators were clear what the site rules were around the transportation of potato boxes and to effectively enforce these.

Breagate Produce Ltd of Mill Hill, Breagate Lane, Colton, Tadcaster pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Workplace (Health and Safety Welfare) Regulations 1991. The company has been fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £962 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Kate Dixon commented: "Companies need to organise transport operations to reduce the risk it poses to pedestrians. This should include consideration of the site, driver and vehicles. There are some quick, easy and inexpensive steps that can be implemented.

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