



# Wilkins Safety Group

**Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

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## *Welcome to our latest Update E-Newsletter*

As ever, please feel free to share this with friends and colleagues. You will also find PDF versions of all our other newsletters on our website: [www.wilkinssafety.co.uk](http://www.wilkinssafety.co.uk) with lots more useful information and a wealth of leaflets covering Health and Safety topics.

## *Welcome to 2015*

**We at the Wilkins Safety Group would like to wish you all a happy, prosperous and, above all, a safe New Year.**

In our forthcoming newsletters we shall endeavour to keep you up-to-date with legislative changes, updates and tidbits from the world of health and safety. Like previous years we will keep it informative and

relevant and not inundate you with unnecessary advertisements or sales pitches from other companies. We will keep you informed of upcoming training courses and services available from us. We will also keep you abreast of the latest HSE cases which we hope make you think about your business and what you can do to improve things.

**What we would like from you** - is feedback on any various topics you would like featured in the newsletters, or feedback on any health and safety situations you might have experienced within your own organisation - serious, funny or silly.

As an organisation we look forward to working with you during this forthcoming year to assist in ensuring you and your company attains compliance with health and safety legislation, then maintaining that compliance.

### **This week's 2 recent HSE cases look at accidents in which the victims suffered serious injuries.**

- **Daniel Whiston**, from Dulverton, was allowed to drive the dumper, which had a number of serious defects, before it overturned down the embankment.
- **A 57-year-old maintenance electrician** punctured both lungs and broke ten ribs, his breastbone, two bones in his spine and two in his right hand.

## ***Health and Safety in 2014 – The Year in Review***



As is customary in December, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has released its annual round up of health and safety statistics for the year 2013-2014. And although health and safety provisions are thought to be improving year on year, some of the findings make for sobering reading.

### **Over a million workplace illnesses**

According to the collected statistics, over 1.2 million people reported that they were suffering from a work-related illness. Although this is a significant number, the HSE makes clear that not all of these illnesses are new, nor were they necessarily acquired in roles this year. The figures simply state that 1.2 million continued to work despite illnesses brought about by workplace conditions at some point in the past. Just under half of these cases, approximately 500,000, were new conditions first reported during 2013/2014.

This does however mean that approximately 4% of the UK workforce was affected by workplace illnesses at some point during the last twelve months.

### **Workplace injuries are still cause for concern**

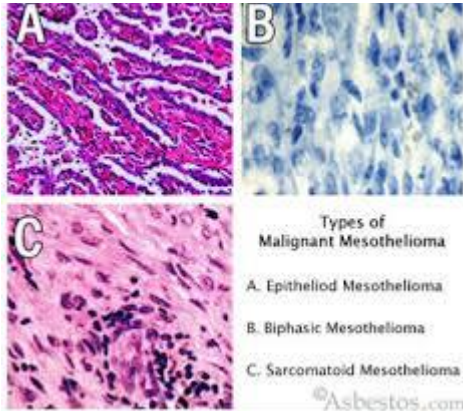
Quoted by the HSE, statistics gathered by the Labour Force Survey suggest that 629,000 employees were injured at their place of work. The exact nature and severity of these injuries were not specified, but they still represent a significant cause of concern; around 2% of the total UK workforce was injured over the course of the year.



### **Workplace deaths – on the way down**

Workplace deaths continue to fall, but there were still 133 employees killed at their place of work over the last year. Agriculture and construction remain the most dangerous industries for employees, although rising standards have seen mortality rates fall year on year.

## Employment related cancer is still a concern



On average around 13,000 people die every year from lung disease and cancer caused by exposure to chemicals, asbestos or dust in the workplace. Of the 8000 cases of cancer recorded each year, the majority are related to historical asbestos exposure. In both cases these diseases take many years to develop and could have been caused by coming into contact with the substance 30 to 40 years ago.

Mesothelioma, a particularly aggressive form of lung cancer often associated with asbestos exposure, was responsible for 2535 deaths this year – a rise on 2011.

However health experts expect cases of asbestos to peak within the next few years before dropping steadily as historical changes to asbestos law mean that less people have been exposed over the intervening period.

Other non-asbestos related causes of cancer were found to be silica inhalation, diesel engine exhaust fumes, exposure to mineral oils and breast cancer caused by shift work patterns. Again, many of these cases are caused by historical, long-term exposure to harmful chemicals – often before the introduction of the current Health and Safety at Work Act.

## A positive sign for the future

Deaths caused by health and safety failings in the workplace are thankfully on a long term decline, showing that protective legislation really is improving conditions. Although there is still a long way to go until workplace fatalities reach zero, continued improvements like those seen this year are encouraging.

**So over to you** – What are you going to do to improve health safety at your workplace?



If you need further information please call us on [01458 253682](tel:01458253682) or send us an email at [info@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wilkinssafety.co.uk)

**Now to the latest HSE cases:**

## ***Dulverton man, 20, crushed by four-tonne dumper on first day of work***



**A 20-year-old man died on his first day at work for a new company when the four-tonne dumper he was driving toppled over a bank and crushed him.**

Daniel Whiston, from Dulverton, was allowed to drive the dumper, which had a number of serious defects, before it overturned down the embankment at Sweetings Farm, near Tiverton, on 27 October 2009.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigated the incident, and prosecuted Mr Whiston's employers, company directors William Friend and Robert Plume, at Exeter Crown Court today (22 Dec).

The court heard that Plume and Friend's company, Wedgewood Buildings Ltd, had been contracted to expand a pond on the farm, which involved excavating and moving spoil around the site.

Mr Whiston received about 30 minutes' training from a more experienced colleague, who was also operating an excavator and filling the dumper, before he started his first day's work. During the afternoon, the excavator operator, who was the only other worker on site saw the fully-loaded dumper driven by Mr Whiston topple off the side of the causeway and down the 60 degree slope, turning over and crushing him underneath.

HSE's investigation found a number of serious failings on the site:

- The excavator driver was not trained to teach Mr Whiston how to use the dumper and was not competent to supervise him.
- The dumper had a number of serious defects, including steering failure, defective and inoperative front braking and a non-functioning handbrake with worn-out parts.
- No suitable or sufficient risk assessments had been carried out for the work and no safe system of work was used.
- The causeway used by the dumper was too narrow for a front-tipping dumper to be positioned and safely tip the load down the embankment.

Robert Plume, of East Street, South Molton, and William Friend, of Hannaford, Swimbridge, near Barnstaple, each pleaded guilty to a breach of Health and Safety legislation. Each was given a 12 month custodial sentence, suspended for two years, and 180 hours of community service, to be completed within a year. They were also ordered to pay costs of £25,000 each.

HSE Inspector Jonathan Harris, speaking after the hearing, said:

***"The very serious failures to manage this job properly contributed to the tragic and needless loss of a young man's life.***

***"Workers have a right to expect that the equipment they use is appropriate for the task, properly maintained and in a safe condition.***

***"Mr Whiston was not given suitable basic or advanced training under the industry's Construction Plant Competence Scheme and was, instead, given a short briefing by a worker who himself had no formal qualifications for driving the dumper.***

**“Anyone in control of construction projects must ensure the work is properly planned and risk assessed to avoid similar tragedies in the future. Knowing what needs to be done is not the same as knowing how it should be done safely.”**

Further information on construction site safety can be found on the Wilkins Safety Group website at [www.wilkinssafety.co.uk](http://www.wilkinssafety.co.uk)

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## ***Jaguar Land Rover prosecuted over worker's 'horrific' injuries***



**Jaguar Land Rover Ltd has been fined for safety breaches after an employee suffered life-threatening crush injuries when he was dragged into inadequately guarded machinery**

The 57-year-old maintenance electrician from Northfield, Birmingham, who has asked not to be named, punctured both lungs and broke ten ribs, his breastbone, two bones in his spine and two in his right hand. He had blood clots on his heart and kidneys and was in an induced coma in intensive care for 12 days. He was in hospital for a further seven days but was

The incident happened in the paint shop at the Lode Lane, Solihull, site, HSE said back at work within 17 weeks.

The incident happened in the paint shop at the company's Lode Lane site in Solihull on 14 June 2013

Birmingham Crown Court was told a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that following the latest in a series of frequent production line stoppages the employee approached a gap in the perimeter guarding that surrounded the vehicle body lifting equipment so he could witness the troublesome process in operation.

As he watched he was hit by an empty vehicle body carrier on a circulatory chain conveyor that was travelling through the gap. He was knocked to the ground and forcibly dragged through the gap into a restricted processing area where he was severely crushed.

The gap remained unguarded following the incident until HSE enforcement required that further protective measures be provided. The area of conveyor was enclosed with fixed perimeter guards by Jaguar Land Rover and a robust key exchange access system introduced.

Jaguar Land Rover Ltd, of Abbey Road, Whitley, Coventry, was today (Dec 23) fined £40,000 with £13,474 costs after pleading guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

Passing sentence, His Honour Judge Carr said Jaguar Land Rover

**“fell far short of a safe and reasonable standard”, adding:**

**“This was an entirely reasonable, foreseeable situation. The breach was an ongoing failure and an accident waiting to happen.”**

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector John Glynn said:

“The incident was entirely preventable. Although the gap was minimally sized to allow empty carriers into the restricted area, it also allowed access to dangerous moving parts within the production process while in itself creating a crush hazard with the moving conveyor.

“Jaguar Land Rover has extensive safety systems in place and the Lode Lane plant had other facilities with similar processes that are guarded much more effectively. The company should have ensured the same level of protection at this location. It didn’t and as a result a man suffered horrific injuries. It is remarkable that he recovered enough to return to work within 17 weeks. The incident could very easily have ended his life.”

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## Remember

Unlike other organisations who send out newsletters giving you a little 'titbit' of information, then stating that if you want to follow the full link or read the full story or get more information you must pay to subscribe to their service.

- Our newsletter service is FREE,
- the links we supply are FREE,
- the helpline advice is FREE.

If you find this newsletter service of use and you think others might also find it useful, then kindly pass it on and ask them to subscribe for free, so they can continue to receive it in their own right.

Also contact us if you have a particular health and safety subject or question you would like covered



If you have any queries on any health and safety matter, please contact Jon Wilkins on [01458 253682](tel:01458253682) or by email on [jon@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:jon@wilkinssafety.co.uk)



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