



Wilkins Safety Group

Monday, 14th July 2014

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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 with lots more useful information and a wealth of leaflets covering Health and Safety topics.

This week we return, following a two week break for the wonderful lady, Pam, that posts this on line for us.

Now with Pam away the worst thing that happened to us was not having this newsletter sent out on line. But it got me thinking about potential health and safety problems some firms can face when staff go off on holiday.



There are also many companies that employ lone workers as a matter of course such as farms, bailiffs and delivery services where they have a duty to ensure the safety of these members of staff.

We also have 2 recent HSE cases for you to look at and consider:

- **Lee Woodhouse, of Wilberfoss**, died from serious crush injuries when he was struck and then run over by a 27-tonne turf harvester.
- **Zofia Jurek, 63, jumped from a moving platform.** She fractured her skull, suffering a brain haemorrhage, and broke a heel, which required metal plates to repair.

We would also like to introduce a new member of our team

Trevor Lumbard GFireE is our new Fire Safety Specialist. As a result we can now offer a Fire Risk Assessment and Consultancy Service.

In England and Wales, if you're an employer, owner, landlord or occupier of business or other non-domestic premises, you are responsible for fire safety and are required to have thorough Fire Risk Assessments carried out. For more about Trevor and the service – Please read on.

Working alone/Holiday relief

At this time of year with holidays causing many companies to work with less than usual staff, some companies have staff who will be required to work alone for short periods of time.

So have a read of this weeks' newsletter and consider if you have the correct procedures in place to ensure the safety of all staff. If you do require further assistance then drop an email to info@wilkinssafety.co.uk



Lone worker - Home worker.

Do you have any staff who have to work alone?

Do you know your duties to ensure the safety of Lone working Staff?

Many companies have staff who for one reason or another work alone or remotely from the main office, these can include:

- Delivery drivers
- Sales people
- Home workers
- Security staff
- Shift workers
- Cleaners
- Agricultural staff
- etc. etc. etc.

What as employers do we have to consider when employing someone who will be working away from the main office environment or remotely within that environment?

Can a person be left alone to work?

There are no absolute restrictions on working alone; it will depend on the findings of a risk assessment.

There are two main pieces of legislation that will apply:

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:

Section 2 sets out a duty of care on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees whilst they are at work.

The Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999:

Regulation 3 states that every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of -

- the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and
- the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking

Although there is no general legal prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of the HSW Act and MHSW Regulations still apply. These require identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved, and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

Control measures may include:

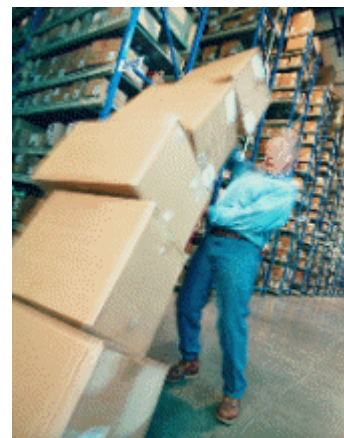
Instruction, training, supervision, protective equipment etc. Employers should take steps to check that control measures are used and review the risk assessment from time to time to ensure it is still adequate.

When risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up should be put in place. Where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, that employer should inform the lone worker's employer of any risks and the control measures that should be taken. This helps the lone worker's employer to assess the risks.

Risk assessment should help decide the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present. Examples include some high-risk confined space working where a supervisor may need to be present, as well as someone dedicated to the rescue role, and electrical work at or near exposed live conductors where at least two people are sometimes required.

Lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. This may require extra risk-control measures. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Employers should identify situations where people work alone and ask questions such as:

1. Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
2. Is there a safe way in and a way out for one person? Can any temporary access equipment which is necessary, such as portable ladders or trestles, be safely handled by one person?
3. Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person? Consider whether the work involves lifting objects too large for one person or whether more than one person is needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.
4. Is there a risk of violence?
5. Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
6. Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?
7. Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
8. What happens if the person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?



If you still feel you need help please call The Wilkins Safety Group on 01458 253682 or email info@wilkinssafety.co.uk or check out our website www.wilkinssafety.co.uk

Now to the latest HSE cases:

East Yorkshire firm to pay £100,000 over worker's tragic death



Lee Woodhouse was run over by a turf-cutting machine he had been driving

A York-based specialist turf company was today (9 July) sentenced for a catalogue of safety failings that led to the death of a 30-year-old employee and father of two.

Lee Woodhouse, of Wilberfoss, died from serious crush injuries when he was struck and then run over by a 27-tonne turf harvester that he had been using in a field off Feoffee Common Lane in Barnby Moor, East Yorkshire.

The incident, on 20 September 2011, was investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which prosecuted Turfgrass Services International Ltd., trading as Inturf, after finding a key safety system on the machine had been deliberately bypassed.

Hull Crown Court was told Mr Woodhouse, who had worked for Inturf for a year, had been using the turf harvester during the morning but had been having technical problems with the operation of the machine.

Later that afternoon, a nearby resident heard a constant noise in the field and saw the machine had stopped against a tree with its wheels still in motion, churning up mud, but there was no driver. He called 999.

Soon after, a co-worker in another field went to investigate after realising the vehicle had not been returned to base. He went into the field and saw Mr Woodhouse on the ground. Paramedics attended but Mr Woodhouse had died at the scene. It was clear he had been run over by the harvester and fatally injured.

HSE's investigation concluded he had been run over while walking alongside the machine to observe or adjust the operation of the cut-off mechanism at the front end that he had been having a problem with earlier that day. After he had been hit, the harvester continued to run and was only stopped when it struck the tree.

HSE said a key finding was that a wire link had been put across the terminals of a relay switch. This defeated a number of safety features on the harvester including, crucially, the cut-off switch attached to the driver's seat designed to cut the operation of the harvesting machinery if the driver was not sitting in the seat.

The harvester had been operated with the safety features disabled since 2009. Further investigation revealed that the safety features on another turf cutting machine being used by the same company had also been deliberately defeated in 2011.

HSE also found the company failed to:

- identify the risks of operating harvesting machines
- implement safe systems of work regarding maintenance and inspection
- train machine operators and their supervisors properly
- protect employees from access to dangerous parts of the machines, and,
- make sure the harvesters were maintained safely and checked regularly. Turfgrass Services International Ltd, trading as Inturf, of The Chestnuts, Wilberfoss, York, was fined £67,000 and ordered to pay £33,000 in costs for a breach of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company admitted the offence at an earlier hearing.

After the sentencing, HSE Inspector Andrea Jones said:

“This was a tragic incident that has had devastating, and life-changing effects, on the whole family, particularly Lee’s wife, two small children and his parents. The incident was entirely preventable.

“Agricultural machines are inherently dangerous and this turf harvesting machine had a number of safety features to protect operators. The seat switch should have stopped the harvesting machinery when the operator leaves the seat. Had the vital seat switch not been disabled, there would have been no reason for Mr Woodhouse to have been observing the cutters at the front of the machine whilst it continued to move forwards in the field.

“It is essential that all employers with machines for use on farms and in the turf-cutting industry put systems in place for checking all safety guarding regularly, and provide training and supervision to make sure machines are not operated with missing or defeated safety functions. All operators must be trained in safe systems of work in relation to making adjustments and clearing blockages in machines.

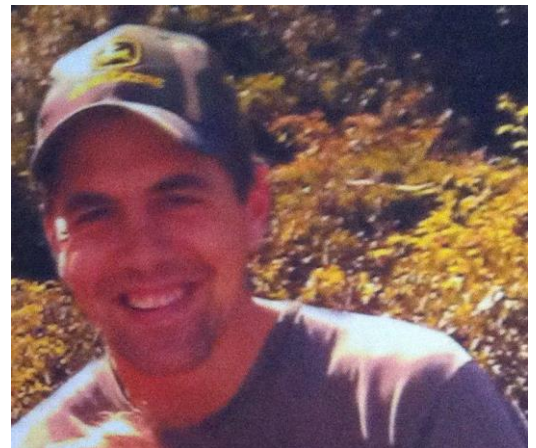
“Agriculture has the second highest rate of deaths of all work sectors. In the last ten years, almost one person a week has been killed as a direct result of agricultural work.

“Life will never be the same again for family members left behind after a work-related death. And in the case of Lee Woodhouse, two young children will now have to grow up without their dad.”

The family of Lee Woodhouse said:

“The death of Lee has left a huge vacuum in all our lives. He was full of life, sincere, helpful and a loving family man, very involved in all aspects of family life.

“He is deeply missed. Lee’s life centered around his family, friends and his job and our family has been left devastated by his tragic loss.”



For information on safety with agricultural equipment, visit http://www.wilkinssafety.co.uk/pdf/whss/agricultural_equipment.pdf

Salad grower fined after employee fall

An Essex salad grower has been prosecuted for safety failings after a worker suffered extensive injuries when she had to jump from a runaway mobile working platform at its nurseries in Nazeing.

Zofia Jurek, 63, jumped from the moving platform at a height of about 1.4 metres as it accelerated down a ramp and towards a greenhouse door during the incident on 25 July 2013.

As she landed on the concrete floor she fractured her skull, suffering a brain haemorrhage, and broke a heel, which required metal plates to repair.

Ms Jurek's head injury has affected her hearing, balance, and ability to read. The back of her skull is still very sensitive to touch and heat and she has not fully regained her sense of smell and taste. She was on crutches for several months, is still unable to stand for very long and has not been able to return to work.

Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd was today (11 July) prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after an investigation found that more could and should have been done to prevent the incident.

HSE told Chelmsford Crown Court that the company had not adequately identified the risk the sloping floor posed to workers using the mobile platforms, known on site as electric trolleys. The platforms were found to be in need both of numerous repairs and better guard rails to prevent falls.

The court heard that workers used the platforms to pick bell peppers at heights of up to three metres. They were designed to run on level ground but were not fitted with brakes. On the day of the incident Ms Jurek was picking bell peppers close to the top of a ramp which led into a greenhouse. When she was a metre away from the slope she pushed the trolley across the aisle to the opposite row of pepper plants and set the controls to make the electric trolley travel away from the ramp.

However, when she pressed the accelerator the trolley travelled towards and down the ramp instead. She jumped off the front of the trolley and tried to stop it hitting the greenhouse door, but in doing so she was knocked unconscious.

Shortly afterwards, the company fitted bollards at the top of the ramp which would have prevented the incident.

Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd of Paynes Lane, Nazeing, Essex, was fined £22,000 and ordered to pay £8,830 in costs after pleading guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Sue Matthews said:

“Work at any height is inherently very risky, and it has to be properly planned, controlled and supervised.

“Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd failed to take inexpensive and simple precautions which would have prevented Ms Jurek's injuries. The risk to workers using trolleys near to the ramp was known to the company but no action was taken to provide adequate protection.

“Employers must always assess the risks to employees at work and take the necessary steps to ensure their safety. This worker sustained a serious head injury and is still unable to return to work as a direct result of Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd's failure to manage the risks of this operation.”

More details about working safely with mobile elevated platforms can be found on the **Wilkins Safety Group** website at: www.wilkinssafety.co.uk

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Introducing Trevor Lumbard

We are pleased to introduce **Trevor Lumbard GFireE** as our new Fire Safety Specialist. He qualified as a Fire Safety Officer in 1976 and served in excess of 30 years in the Fire Service in which time he dealt with all types of fire related legislation including petroleum.



Trevor attended various courses at the Fire Service College at Morton-in-Marsh including and passing the 12 week Specialist Fire Safety Course. He also holds Graduate Membership of the Institute of Fire Engineers which is a worldwide recognised qualification.

Since his retirement from the Fire Service as a senior Fire Safety Officer, Trevor has dealt with a large number and range of properties around the United Kingdom including Shopping Centres, Hotels, Factories, Offices, Shops, Pop Concerts, Animal Centres/ Zoo's, Listed Stately Homes, Hospitals, Care Homes, Petrol Stations, Churches, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Flats.

For more information about our Fire Risk Assessment and Consultancy service please call us on 01458 253682 or info@wilkinssafety.co.uk

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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



Your Business is
Safer in Our Hands