
Housing Company Fined Â£300K After Worker Killed by Concrete Blocks

Description

In a recent case that underscores the dire consequences of safety lapses, a housing company has been fined over Â£300,000 following a fatal accident at a South Lanarkshire construction site. The tragic incident, which led to the death of a driver, highlights the critical need for stringent safety protocols in construction environments.

On April 19, 2017, Conor Joseph Morgan, a 45-year-old HGV driver employed by Regen Waste Limited, was involved in a fatal accident at Shott Farm, a site managed by Avant Homes (Scotland) Limited. Morgan was delivering materials when the accident occurred. He was struck and killed by falling concrete blocks as they were being unloaded from an articulated flatbed trailer.

The blocks were being unloaded using an excavator fitted with a pallet fork attachment. Unfortunately, the pallet forks were too long for the pallet being lifted, which led to a catastrophic failure. As the forklift lifted the pallet, the forks snagged on a second pallet of concrete blocks, causing them to fall from the trailer and onto Morgan.

Following the incident, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) conducted a thorough investigation. The findings revealed significant safety breaches. Avant Homes (Scotland) Limited, as the principal contractor, was found to have failed in ensuring a safe system of work for unloading deliveries. Additionally, Regen Waste Limited did not carry out an adequate risk assessment for drivers delivering to remote and uncontrolled sites.

In a hearing at Hamilton Sheriff Court on June 19, Avant Homes (Scotland) Limited, based in Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh, pleaded guilty to violating Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined Â£333,000. Regen Waste Limited, located in Newry, County Down, admitted to breaching Regulation 3(1)(a) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and was fined Â£23,000.

After the verdict, Graeme McMinn, the HSE principal inspector, commented, "This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident. It was caused by the principal contractor's failure to implement a safe system of work. Furthermore, the employer failed to conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment." He emphasized the HSE's commitment to enforcing safety standards, stating, "Companies should be aware that the HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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