

Property company and director fined £80,000 following worker's fatal fall from a tree

A property investment company and its director have been fined after a worker fell from a tree causing fatal injuries.

Nottingham Crown Court heard how on 27 September 2017 untrained workers were tasked with taking down a large, dead sycamore tree on Ebers Road in Nottingham using a chain saw. One worker went up a ladder and used the saw to cut a branch, which when released swung back at the worker knocking him out of the tree. As he was not using ropes to anchor himself into the tree he then fell to the ground. The man was taken to hospital and sadly died two weeks later.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) revealed that workers should have been trained in chainsaw use and in working with saws in trees. The work should also have been properly planned with competent workers using correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for operating the saws and climbing the tree.

Claudio De Falco of The Spinney, Woodthorpe, Nottingham as Director pleaded guilty to a breach of Regulation 4 (1)(c) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. He was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,350.

CDF Properties Investment Ltd of Haydn Road, Nottingham pleaded guilty to a breach Regulation 4 (1)(c) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

The company was fined £80,000 and ordered to pay costs of £12,700.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Martin Giles said:

“Using chain saws on and in trees is a specialised task and should only be carried out by trained and competent people using the right protective equipment for using the saws and climbing trees.

“Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.”