

West Midlands company fined £200,000 after worker killed by forklift truck

A Birmingham manufacturer of calcium carbonate products has today been sentenced after a worker suffered fatal injuries when struck by a forklift truck.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard how, on 24 July 2017, Christine Workman, an employee of Minteq UK Ltd (trading as Specialty Minerals) was struck by a forklift truck whilst walking in the designated pedestrian area of the site's roadway. She suffered severe crush injuries and tragically died on 8 August 2017.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the measures in place to separate and segregate pedestrians from vehicles were inadequate, with the designated pedestrian walkway running, unprotected, down the centre of the roadway used by vehicles.

Minteq UK Ltd of Lifford Lane, Kings Norton, Birmingham, pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and has been fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £23,217.87.

Speaking after the case, HSE inspector Kay Brookes commented:

"Far too many people are killed and seriously injured by vehicles in the workplace every year. Provisional data for 2018-19 shows that of the 147 workers fatally injured, 30 of them were as a result of being struck by a moving vehicle. Many hundreds are left with life-changing injuries.

"The requirement to ensure adequate separation and segregation between pedestrians and vehicles is paramount. This tragic and wholly avoidable incident highlights the need for companies to comply with their legal duty to identify what can kill and seriously hurt people in their workplace and take steps to stop that happening."