

AVERT

Safety Health & Environmental Avert

A house builder has been fined £20,000 after a young boy was seriously injured when some timber roof trusses fell onto him.

The eight year old boy was playing with friends on 28 April 2009 when they got into an unsecured storage area on a construction site at Meadowbrook, Linwood, near Paisley.

The development was nearing completion and the house builder, BDW Trading Ltd, had sold some of the finished houses and there were people living in them while work continued on the remaining homes. The young boy and his family had moved into one of these new houses.

As the children were playing in the storage area, some timber roof trusses fell onto the boy, trapping him underneath.

He was rescued by two neighbours who managed to lever the roof trusses up off him, allowing him to escape. One of the neighbours drove the boy home, and his father immediately took him to the Royal Alexandria Hospital in Paisley. However, his injuries were so serious that he was transferred to Yorkhill Children's Hospital in Glasgow.

The boy sustained a serious injury to his liver and had abdominal bleeding, and was kept in hospital for eight days. In the months following the incident, he developed a number of anxiety-related symptoms such as nightmares and poor concentration.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the construction site was only partially fenced, and as a result there was a large gap at the side and rear which meant that the site could be easily accessed by members of the public, including children.

The investigation also revealed that the roof trusses had, at some point, been stacked upright which made them unstable and more likely to fall over.

Paisley Sheriff's Court heard that when an HSE Inspector visited the site, BDW Trading Ltd were not aware that there had been an incident and that a young child had been injured.



ISSUE NUMBER
December 2011

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1 Mar 2012	7 Jun
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The Inspector served an Improvement Notice to the company requiring them to improve site fencing to prevent any further unauthorised access.

After the hearing, HSE Inspector Gerry McCulloch said:

"BDW Trading Ltd knew that families were living right next to of the construction site, and as such the safety of children should have been a primary consideration.

If the company had taken the straight forward precaution of fencing off the construction site, the children would not have been able to get into the area and this young lad would not have received potentially life-threatening injuries."

If you are in any doubt of your legal duties in respect of site security call Aversion on 0113 201 2150 for further information and advice.

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