

MAY

NEWSLETTER

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Company Fined After Death of Man Whose Life was 'Unjustly Cut Short'



A construction company has been fined after a kitchen fitter was crushed to death by a pack of concrete blocks at a site in the Cotswolds.

Martin Dunford, who was 33, was 'very much loved' by his family who say they miss him 'every day' since the incident on 23 January 2020. Martin, from Pocklington in Yorkshire, was killed after being pinned against the side of a lorry loader as two stacks of concrete blocks fell onto him.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Martin had walked around a lorry loader to talk to a driver about how long he would be on site, as he needed access to one of the properties being built. A stack of concrete blocks which had been placed on top of another stack of blocks, which was also supported by a wooden pallet, toppled over onto him, pinning him against the side of the lorry. He sustained severe internal and head injuries and died on site.

Piper Homes Construction Limited, who were the principal contractor on the site, had failed to ensure that a suitable, level storage area was provided for the safe offloading of construction materials.

NO FALLS WEEK (12-16 MAY)

Help us Save Lives by Stopping Falls

Falls from heights are consistently the leading cause of workplace fatalities in the U.K.

The latest figures from the HSE show that 50 people lost their lives at work due to a fall from height in 2023/24.

Falls from height were responsible for 36% of all workplace deaths (this proportion was 25% in 2021/22, rising to 30% in 2022/23).

WHAT YOU MUST DO!

Avoid work at height where possible

- Use equipment or redesign processes so that working at height isn't needed.

Use the right work equipment

- If work at height can't be avoided, use equipment like scaffolding, towers, or mobile elevated work platforms (MEWPs) that reduce risk.

Prevent falls using collective protection

- Such as guard rails, toe boards, and working platforms.

Mitigate consequences of a fall

- If risks remain, provide PPE (like harnesses), safety nets, or airbags.

Plan and supervise work properly

- All work at height must be properly planned, supervised, and carried out by competent people.

Risk assessments

- Identify hazards, evaluate risks, and put in place suitable control measures.

Ensure equipment is maintained

- Regular inspection and maintenance of all equipment used for working at height.

Provide information and training

- Ensure employees understand how to use safety equipment and perform tasks safely.



Update to Foam Fire Extinguishers

The UK is phasing out Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) fire extinguishers due to environmental and health concerns associated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), often referred to as "forever chemicals." These substances are persistent in the environment and have been linked to various health issues.

Current situation

In January 2022 the ambiguous guidance made in "Compliance Advice for PFOA in Class B Firefighting Foams" prepared by the Environment Agency is the cause for the confusion, implying that all AFFF has to be removed from service by 4th July 2025.

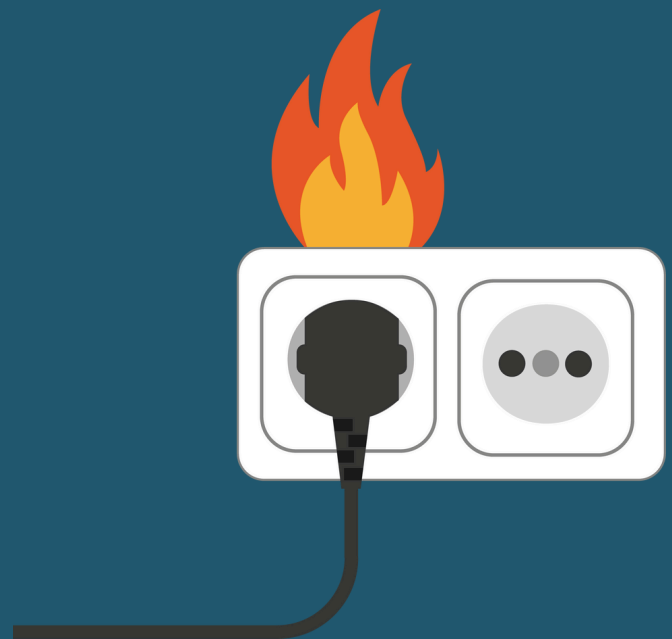
This directive is actually aimed at fire-fighting foams containing PFOS, PFOA and PFHxS, all of which are found in fixed firefighting systems, and in some fire brigade foams. Our understanding from discussion with several extinguisher manufacturers, is that extinguishers manufactured from 2015/16 have since then been filled with AFFF that exclude these chemicals, therefore compliant extinguisher AFFF can continue to be used after the 4th of July 2025 deadline.

The current concern is the PFHxA is used in extinguisher AFFF which DEFRA and the HSE together have consulted with stakeholders (<https://consultations.hse.gov.uk/crd-reach/pfas-fire-fighting-foams>) to shortly decide the phase out date for extinguisher AFFF. This is not expected to be before 2030, thus giving consumers the full 5-years until due extended service and replacement.



Fire Safety in Construction

This month our safety campaign document will be focused around fire safety in construction and what you must do.



WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

CSS strive to ensure that we offer the best possible advice as early as possible. If you have any concerns, or questions in relation to the project you are working on, please call us so that we can advise and offer any assistance that may be needed. We have a very approachable team who are there to help through the whole project process.



CDM TRAINING



CSS offer a range of CDM training sessions which can be carried out at a location that suits you, or online. This includes CDM training for all duty holders.

If you would like training undertaken please do not hesitate to contact our office on 01869 220649 where we will be happy to help.

Alternatively, if you want to discuss safety matters, or the newsletter contact Adam Hart on 07590 046736 or adam.hart@constructionss.co.uk

