

Firm fined over man's death

AN Altrincham firm has been fined nearly £17,000 after a worker was crushed to death by a container of dye.

Townley Dyestuffs, of Manway Business Park in Timperley, pleaded guilty to a charge of failing to ensure the safety at work of an employee, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

During the hearing at Trafford Magistrates' Court on Wednesday,

January 21, the court heard that on August 24, 2005 a 1.1-tonne container of dye slid off the front of a forklift truck and onto 38-year-old Mark Kiveal, from Northenden.

Townley Dyestuffs was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay £6,963 costs.

Richard Clarke, a Health and Safety Executive inspector, said: "This was a tragic accident that could have been prevented had a safe sys-

tem of work been in place.

"The container had a specialist mechanism for emptying it, but an improvised method was used when the incident happened.

"Two containers had successfully been opened and an attempt to unload the third was taking place when it slid off the front forks of the truck and tragically crushed Mr Kiveal.

"employers have a

responsibility to ensure that the right equipment is used for the job and to ensure that loads are safely secured. That wasn't the case in this incident, which sadly led to the loss of a man's life."

Speaking following the hearing, a company spokesman said: "We obviously regret the incident deeply.

"It has been three years and we just want to move on now."

Friends' red tape concern

FRUSTRATED volunteers say they could be forced to scrap park fun days because of council red tape.

Park friends' groups have spoken out after they were told they would have to take on time-consuming duties to make sure the events are safe.

Trafford Council has emailed new forms for volunteers to fill in if they are organise big events, which state the onus is on them to assess risks, check insurance details for private firms like fairground ride suppliers and scour the credentials of every first aider on duty.

It says groups have always had these responsibilities - though the volunteers disagree.

Maureen Reilly, chairwoman of the Friends of Lostock Park, says groups are incensed by what she says are extra demands.

She said: "This form is certainly making me think twice about whether I want to run events.

"We have two events planned for local families this year but I'm not prepared to take on the extra responsibilities. Groups will start to refuse to hold events, which would be a shame

by Bethan Dorsett

for the community."

Mrs Reilly says the extra responsibilities could cost volunteers time and, potentially, money, while she argues these duties should be shouldered by the council, which employs a designated events coordinator.

When filling out the forms, the council asks that groups carry out comprehensive risk assessments - which many do already - and hand over insurance documents for each private company they use along with proof that each first aider on site has been trained.

They are also being asked to ensure all marshals are trained, which Mrs Reilly says groups will have to pay for.

She added: "It does seem like the council is trying to shift the responsibility of organising these events on to volunteers.

"If Trafford Council wants us to keep running these events they need to be offering more support."

Shelly Quinton-Hulme represents Victoria Park, Stretford, as chairwoman of its Friends group.

Agreeing with Mrs Reilly,



ANGRY: Maureen Reilly, chairwoman of the Friends of Lostock Park, says campaigners are 'incensed'

she said: "It comes to something when the small community groups that are the lifeblood of our parks feel they can no longer stage events due to red tape. A lot are now saying that they may not be holding any events because there is just too much admin.

"We tend to hold quite small events but others hold bigger ones that will be affected."

A council spokesman said: "Any group that intends to hold an event on Trafford land is required to complete an event application form, carry out a risk assessment and make sure they are properly insured (although we do provide public liability insurance for friends'

groups' own activities.)

"This has always been the case and no changes have been made to this procedure.

"The letters which have been sent out to friends of parks groups are simply copies of the new events application form.

"The public liability insurance provided by Trafford is for the activities of the friends' groups only, therefore any third party operator such as an ice cream van, a bouncy castle supplier or a fairground operator must provide their own public liability insurance - which any reliable operator should have and be able to supply copies of as a matter of course."