

HAZARDS

Domestic Automatic Gates



Several children have become victims in the last year after becoming crushed to death by gates.

Two separate fatalities occurred in June and early July 2010 in Bridgend (South Wales) and Moss Side (Greater Manchester) where children died after becoming trapped by automatic gates.

At Silverstone 2010 we reported an incident from January where a 9-year old child was crushed between an electric gate and brick pillar in Bournemouth after reaching through the gate to operate the button on the other side, and then becoming trapped.

Three fatal accidents, and a series of injuries arising from automatic systems recently, serve as an important reminder to surveyors inspecting premises with automatic gates, to make an assessment of their safety and to report any hazards which might lead to injury, particularly where DIY installation has taken place using imported kits.

It serves as a salutary reminder that a large heavy gate hung from and opening against a supporting pillar, can apply a huge mechanical force to any object positioned between the gate and pillar – acting in just the same way as a nut-cracker.

Although safety devices are frequently fitted to detect obstructions in the path of the gateway and halt the operation, design is usually intended to prevent damage to vehicles rather than people or pets near the hanging parts at the sides.

Other children have escaped serious injury after becoming trapped by the operation of electric gates, including a 3-year old from Ipswich who became pinned into an 8cm gap against a wall in May 2010.

AESIF
*(The Automatic
Entrance Systems
Installers Federation)*

AESIF (*The Automatic Entrance Systems Installers Federation*) was established to assist in setting trade standards for automatic gates and publishes helpful information which surveyors may wish to consult for advice. The organisation provides certification for its members.

**Machinery Directive
MD 2006/42/EC**

Surveyors should also be aware of EC Machinery Directive MD 2006/42/EC which is incorporated into UK law by the Health and Safety; The Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 No. 1597 which came into force on 29 December 2009.

New guidelines 2011

Addendum November 2011

Two new sets of guidelines for safety officers and individuals involved in automatic-gate installation have been issued by Gate Safe, a national campaign that aims to improve the safety of automated gates.

	<p>The Gate Safe Physical guidelines provide a comprehensive overview of key physical factors that may contribute to the overall safety of an automatic gate. The guidelines are supported by pictorial references to illustrate each of the founding principles.</p> <p>The Gate Safe Simple Checks guidelines provide an easy-to-follow set of tests that can be applied to quickly identify whether or not an automatic gate complies with current safety recommendations.</p> <p>For further information and to access the guidelines go to: www.gate-safe.co.uk</p>
<p>Useful Guidance</p>	<p>Useful websites:</p> <p>AESIF Online: http://www.aesif.org.uk/news.aspx?newsitem=77</p> <p>Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008: www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2008/uksi_20081597_en_1</p> <p>EC Directive: MD 2006/42/EC: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/mechanical/documents/legislation/machinery/</p> <p>See also:</p> <p>Poole Accident 2006: http://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/the-construction-index-news/Construction-company-fined-80-000-after-boy-s-head-crushed-by-electric-gates</p> <p>Hythe Accident, April 2010: http://www.kentnews.co.uk/kent-news/Boy,-six,-crushed-by-electric-gate-in-Hythe-newsinkent35096.aspx?news=local</p> <p>Ipswich Accident, May 2010: www.eveningstar.co.uk/news/boy_crushed_by_electric_gate_1_341241</p> <p>Moss Side Fatality, June 2010: www.bbc.co.uk/news/10457704</p> <p>Bridgend Fatality, July 2010: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1291974/Girl-second-child-crushed-death-week http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1291974/Girl-5-second-child-crushed-death-electric-gates-week.html</p> <p>www.gate-safe.co.uk</p> <p style="text-align: right;">© R.H. Hulls: July 2010 & G. Woodward: Nov. 2011</p>