



FALLING GATES HAZARD

Falling heavy gates represent a serious hazard ...

There has been a worrying number of tragic incidents involving heavy metal gates falling and causing serious injury or death as a result of crushing. Since 2010, Gate Safe is aware of 9 deaths and 11 accidents in the UK, each as result of a major mechanical fault that could have been resolved during a routine maintenance inspection.

The reality is, the heavier the gate, the greater the risk. To put this into perspective, a wrought iron or a five bar timber gate will weigh in at around 20kg per square metre making a 2m high 2m wide gate weigh a significant 80kg (12.5 stones in imperial measures). Add to this the fact that when a gate falls it gains momentum as it is falling. This results in a large gate inflicting more damage to any gate users / passers by than a small gate.

Furthermore, if the gate is solid then clearly it will not only be heavier, probably at least twice the weight, it will also represent an even more significant hazard during challenging weather conditions when high winds could increase the likelihood of the gate falling.

A gate that is no longer mechanically sound represents an unsafe gate. Use the checklist below to assess any gates that you either own or regularly use.

- Is the gate stiff to operate?
- Will a single point failure allow the gate to fall?
- Has the gate dropped so that it scrapes along the ground when it moves?
- Does the gate rattle, which might indicate that the fixings are loose?
- Does the gate feature physical stops to prevent it falling away from its support posts?
- Are there any signs of rust around the hinges or around the gate frame?
- Are the posts tight and secure in the ground – or are they loose?
- Are the hinge pins of the gate or the bolts / gate eyes showing any signs of disrepair / wear and tear?



If the answer to any of the above is **YES**, then the gate needs to be inspected by a suitably qualified person (for example a Gate Safe installer) ASAP to ensure its continued safety.

You wouldn't routinely ignore the need to service a gas boiler or the family car; yet an unstable heavy gate represents just as much of a threat to you or your loved ones' safety.

Don't ignore the signs, contact the experts immediately!

