

# Company fined after worker suffers loss of thumb and fingers

Food manufacturer, Young's Seafood Limited, has been fined after a worker was trapped by a mixing machine.

Grimsby Crown Court heard that, on 16 October 2017, the 59-year-old worker was creating the mix for fish cakes at the company's Humberstone Road factory in Grimsby. At the end of a mix run he went to clear the mix from the machine, lifting an interlocked guard that should have stopped the machine from running. He put his hand into the machine without realising it was still running and the augur caught his hand and drew his arm in up to the elbow. The worker managed to free himself from the augur but in removing his arm, his thumb and two of his fingers were severed and he suffered serious tendon damage. Following the incident doctors were unable to reattach his fingers and he has not yet been able to return to work.



An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the machine continued to run when the safety guard was lifted and failed to respond when the emergency stop was pressed. The interlocking system was inadequate, and the company had failed to ensure that the machine was effectively maintained. These matters were exacerbated by poor communication between the shop floor and maintenance and an inadequate fault reporting system.

Young's Seafood Ltd of Ross House, Wickham Road, Grimsby Lincolnshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £787,500 and ordered to pay £33,443.68 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Carol Downes commented: "The life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented and the risk should have been identified.

"Being pro-active with preventative maintenance and good communication of faults can reduce the chance of harm."

## Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)<sup>[1]</sup>
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)<sup>[2]</sup>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk><sup>[3]</sup>
4. Please see the link below to the page on HSE's website that is the best guide to doing it the right way:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/plant.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/plant.htm)

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## [Automotive engineering company sentenced after employee has allergic reaction at work](#)

An automotive company has been sentenced after an employee developed an allergic form of dermatitis after coming into contact with metalworking fluids.

Reading Magistrates' court heard how, on 24 April 2019, an employee at Xtrac Ltd was splashed on the face and upper body with metalworking fluid whilst cleaning out a grinding machine at a manufacturing site in Thatcham. As a result of the contact the employee had an allergic reaction, consisting of a very painful burning sensation, inflamed, broken and oozing skin, and was diagnosed with allergic contact dermatitis. This is a permanent allergy, which means that even small quantities of this substance can result in a further serious reaction. The employee received medical advice that they could no longer continue in their job as it was a risk to their health.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Xtrac Ltd had failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to identify the potential for exposure to the hazardous chemicals. The company had not implemented necessary controls to prevent skin contact. This was particularly important in this case as the company was already aware the employee had a history of dermatitis.

Xtrac Ltd of Gables Way, Kennet Park, Thatcham pleaded guilty to breaching section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. They were fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £639.59

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ashley Hall said: "Dermal risks from metalworking fluids are well known within industry and there are simple and effective controls available to prevent contact with the skin.

"This serious health condition could have been prevented if the company had carried out the required risk assessment and implemented the necessary control measures, including suitable personal protective equipment, particularly gloves.

"All of these risks and controls are described in HSE and industry guidance, which is widely available."

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2. Further information about working with metalworking fluids can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/metalworking/index.htm>.
3. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](http://legislation.gov.uk/)
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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# [Building contractor fined after worker seriously injures leg](#)

A building contractor has been fined after a worker's leg was seriously injured and later amputated above the knee following the collapse of a masonry wall.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that on 26 June 2019, Sukhjit Singh was working at a domestic property refurbishment for Balwinder Singh Dhillon, trading as Dhillon Builders. Mr Singh, sustained serious injuries when an internal brick wall at first floor level collapsed and fell on him as he worked on the ground floor of the house.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Dhillon failed to properly plan the demolition of supporting walls within the property. He did not take all practicable steps to ensure a safe system of work and make sure the wall was adequately supported after it was made weak by the construction work.

Balwinder Singh Dhillon of Hayes, Middlesex pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 16(2) and 19(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulation 2015 and has been sentenced to 16 weeks imprisonment suspended for 18 months. He was fined £1,500 and ordered to pay costs of £6,818.20.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Fu Lee, said: "The injuries suffered are life changing and the incident could easily have been fatal. This serious incident and devastation could have been avoided if Mr Dhillon had planned a safe system of work and installed appropriate supports to prevent the building he was working on from collapse."

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# [Recycling firm fined following death of forklift driver](#)

A paper recycling company has been fined £600,000 following the death of a 20-year-old agency worker who suffered fatal crush injuries at a plant in Crayford, London.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that on 9 October 2018, agency worker Jamie Wright was driving a forklift truck at Restore Datashred Ltd's plant when it overturned. He was not wearing a seatbelt and became trapped between the forklift's rollover protective structure and the floor. He sustained fatal crush injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found significant failings in the management of workplace transport risks at the site, including issues relating to operator competence and supervision and monitoring.

Restore Datashred Ltd of Queen Elizabeth Distribution Centre in Purfleet, Essex pleaded guilty to a breaching of Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £22,860.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Whittle said: "This was a tragic and preventable work-related incident.

"Companies need to ensure that work equipment, such as forklift trucks, is only operated by those who are trained and competent to do so, and that temporary workers are not allowed to slip through the cracks with regard to appropriate training, supervision and management."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. Guidance on managing lift truck safety can be found here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/lift-trucks/managing-lift-trucks.htm>

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## Window manufacturer fined after worker seriously injured whilst moving stillages

A UPVC window and door manufacturer has been sentenced after a worker was crushed whilst moving a stack of stillages weighing 3000kg.

Blackpool Magistrates' Court heard how, on the 9 January 2020, the worker, with two other employees of Sovereign Group Ltd, was locating a stack of three stillages loaded on a side loader into a gap in the aisle of the despatch area. Whilst manoeuvring the stillages away from the aisle, to make another attempt to push the stillages into the gap, the stack of stillages fell over onto the employee breaking both legs and causing ligament damage. The incident has caused lasting injuries which affect everyday life and the employee has not been able to return to work.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had no formal safe system of work in place and the operatives had developed their own system for swapping stillages, which involved unsafe lifting operations. The method adopted by the company was not safe and employees were not adequately trained or instructed. The despatch area was heavily congested at the time of the incident and poorly laid out for the stillages to be stored safely.

Sovereign Group Ltd of Vale Street, Nelson, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £33,333 and ordered to pay costs of £5,191.58

HSE Principal inspector Lisa Bailey said after the hearing: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to ensure they provide safe methods of working and a safe working environment. If suitable controls had been in place the serious physical injuries sustained by this employee could easily have been prevented."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www Vehicle and transport safety at work \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk/vehicle-transport-safety-at-work).
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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