

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."

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

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/
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

The post [Automotive engineering company sentenced after employee has allergic reaction at work](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[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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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk
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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[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>

The post [Recycling firm fined following death of forklift driver](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[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-and-transport-safety-at-work).
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

The post [Window manufacturer fined after worker seriously injured whilst moving stillages](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Company and director sentenced after two workers injured in falls from height](#)

A facilities and construction management company, along with the director, have been fined after unsuitable scaffolding partially collapsed, injuring two workers.

Newport Magistrates' Court heard that on 8 March 2018, workers on a six-metre high scaffolding tower were carrying out demolition activities at the Citizens Advice Bureau in Church Place, Bargoed when the platform of the

tower partially collapsed. One man suffered broken ribs, tendon damage and since the incident depression and short-term memory loss. The other man suffered three broken vertebrae and has since been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the tower scaffolding was not suitable for the type of work being undertaken. It was not erected by a person trained and competent to do so, had been erected to a height above recommendation and was loaded with a weight greater than the safe working load stated by the manufacturer.

Invictus Facilities and Construction Management Limited of Pontprennau, Cardiff pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. They were fined £106,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,501.

Director of the company Simon Paul Wright of Tredegar pleaded guilty to Section 33 (1a) by virtue of Section 37(1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was ordered to undertake 150 hours of unpaid work.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Gemma Pavey said: "Failure to select suitable and sufficient scaffolding towers and the failure to have them erected and dismantled by a competent person creates risk to workers who could be injured by a fall or collapse.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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For more information and guidance on the use of tower scaffolds please see: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffold.htm>

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