

Car wash firm fined for failing to protect workers and the public

A car wash firm in Devon has been fined £40,000 after it repeatedly failed to protect workers and members of the public from electrical safety risks.

Investigators from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out multiple visits to Best Car Wash Ltd in Tavistock between July 2021 and November 2022. They found employees were carrying out car washing outdoors, using electrical appliances such as pressure washers and vacuum cleaners. However, the company had failed to ensure the installation had been constructed or maintained to prevent danger to both the employees and members of the public. As a result of the electrical hazards identified, the company was issued with five enforcement notices.

Despite the notices, subsequent visits found they had not been complied with and it wasn't until April 2023 that a competent person inspected, tested and repaired the installation.

The HSE investigation found the failure of the employer to comply with the initial notice resulted in electrical safety risks to the vulnerable workers persisting for longer.

Best Car Wash Ltd of Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon did not provide representation at Plymouth Magistrates' Court and were found guilty in their absence of breaching Section 3(1) of the Electricity at Work Regs and Reg 33 (1)(g) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. They were fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,164 on 6 June 2024.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Principal Inspector Helena Allum said: "We can and will prosecute if companies fail to comply with enforcement notices.

"Those in control of work have a responsibility to ensure safe methods of working. The dangers associated with electricity in a work environment are well known and a wealth of advice and guidance is freely available from HSE."

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.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.