

Castings company fined after a worker's hand was crushed in a machine

A foundry company who cast parts for the automotive industry has been fined after an employee had two fingers amputated while attempting to clear a blockage in a moulding machine.

Chesterfield Justice Centre heard that, on 28 February 2018, an employee of William Lee Ltd was attempting to clear a blockage of sand in a moulding machine using a length of metal rod at the company site on Callywhite Lane, Dronfield. The blockage cleared without warning and the employee's right hand was crushed between the rod and the machine, resulting in two fingers being amputated, and a number of fractured bones.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found revealed that had a suitable and sufficient risk assessment been completed the company should have identified that there was a risk to employees created by intervention in the machine when blockage clearance was required. Specific procedures should therefore have been created for blockage clearance. The company could then have developed appropriate instruction, training and information related to the task.

William Lee Ltd of Callywhite Lane, Dronfield, Chesterfield pleaded guilty of breaching the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 section 2(1). The company was fined £60,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector David Keane said: "If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

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. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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