

Company fined after apprentices suffer chemical burns

A car dealership has been fined after two apprentices suffered chemical burns.

Leicestershire Magistrates' Court heard how on 15 March 2018 two apprentices were working at Mercedes-Benz of Northampton in Riverside Business Park, cleaning the vehicle ramps in the workshop using a chemical from an unlabeled barrel. The chemical caused burns to their hands and arms, which resulted in both of them being taken to hospital for treatment.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to ensure that the exposure of this hazardous substance was either prevented or adequately controlled.

Cruickshank Motors Limited (trading as Mercedes-Benz of Northampton) of Penman Way, Grove Park, Leicester was found guilty of breaching Regulation 7(1) of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

The company was fined £360,000 and ordered to pay costs of £12,622.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Aaron Butel said: "When working with hazardous substances, there is a legal requirement of every employer to ensure that exposure is either prevented, or where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply implementing suitable control measures and safe working practices.

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

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>**
- 4. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm>**

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