

Company fined after employee suffers serious burns

A company that produces metal sheet components has been fined after a worker suffered burns to his, face, ears and head.

Hereford Magistrates' Court heard how, on 12 September 2016, an employee of Mettech (Hereford) Limited sustained burns when attempting to light a gas burner present within a powder coating oven.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the gas oven involved did not meet current health and safety standards in that it did not have a flame failure device to prevent the accumulation of unlit gas within the oven. And the gas oven had not been adequately maintained or inspected by a person competent in gas safety. The company also failed to ensure that their employees followed a safe system of work.

Mettech (Hereford) Limited of Folbigg Court, Rotherwas Industrial Estate, Hereford has pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2685.45.

After the hearing HSE inspector Sarah Reilly commented: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

"Companies need to be made aware that they employ people who are competent in gas safety matters to inspect and maintain their gas oven appliances and to ensure that employees are properly trained to light gas ovens."

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

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.