

Company fined after fatal incident using high pressure water jetting equipment

A specialist industrial services company has been fined after a worker suffered a fatal injury whilst cleaning waste-water pipes.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard how, on 18 June 2017, Joseph McDonald, an employee of Leadec Limited, was using high-pressure water jetting equipment to clear paint residue from pipes in the paint shop at a car manufacturing site in Solihull. During the process Mr McDonald was struck by the end of flexi-lance, causing a fatal injury.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company recognised the risks of operating high-pressure water jetting equipment, but they had failed to put in place appropriate measures to mitigate the risks. They had not implemented or enforced the use of various control measures such as a pressure regulator or an anti-ejection device, which were missing at the time of the incident and, training and supervision were also not up to standard.

Leadec Limited of Leadec House, Academy Drive, Warwick pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £2,000,000 and ordered to pay £30,000 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Richard Littlefair said: "Companies must understand that high risk activities require a thorough risk assessment process and robust management systems to protect their employees from risk of serious or fatal injuries.

"It is not good enough for companies to assume they are doing all they can to control the risk just because there have been no previous incidents. Joseph McDonald's death could have been prevented had Leadec Limited had the necessary control measures and management systems in place to protect its employees."

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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