

Company fined after repeated failures to maintain machinery safeguards

A food manufacturing company has been sentenced after repeated failures to maintain safety devices on its food processing machinery.

South Tyneside Magistrates' Court heard that on three separate occasions between July 2008 and March 2016, HSE inspectors visiting the premises of Coldconnection Limited found multiple food processing machines that had non-functional or defeated interlock safety devices. Notices were served on each occasion, requiring the company to remedy the defects, but on a fourth visit in August 2019, the same issues were found again.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted the firm due to the repeated contraventions relating to these safety devices and the failure to maintain improvements.

Coldconnection Limited of Bladen Street Ind Est, Jarrow, Tyne And Wear pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11 (3)(c) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company was fined £14,000 and ordered to pay £928 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stephen Garner said: "While HSE would prefer to engage with businesses proactively through alternative enforcement tools, we can and will bring action through the courts where businesses are found to put their employees at unnecessary risk through repeated contraventions of health and safety law."

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. Further information about health and safety in food and drink manufacturing can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg252.pdf>

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