

Company fined after trainee worker's finger severed

Masher Brothers Limited was sentenced after a trainee worker suffered life-changing injuries when his hand was caught in a rip saw.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that on 20 February 2018, a 20-year-old employee was working with a colleague on the rip saw at the company's site in Lewisham, London, being shown how to cut timber for beading.

The worker and his colleague were using the rip saw to split lengths of timber; one of the two pushed the timber onto the saw, and the other pulled it from the other side. As he was feeding the wood into the machine, the saw pulled his hand in with the wood, causing a severe laceration to his right hand.



The injured person lost the first finger on his right hand, and part of his thumb. He has lost function in this hand and cannot straighten his remaining fingers.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found there were no risk assessments or method statements for the machinery in the joinery workshop. There were inadequate measures in place to prevent access to dangerous parts of various machinery in the workshop; the adjustable top guard sitting over the rip saw blade was stuck in raised position not protecting the blade. The investigation also found Masher Brothers Limited did not provide adequate training to its employees on how to use the machinery and that the member of staff responsible for training the injured person had not received any training in the 30 years he had been employed by the company.

Masher Brothers Limited of New Cross, London pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £8005.44 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Whittle said: "No safe system of work existed at the time of the incident..Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working.

"If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to this incident, the life changing injuries the employee sustained 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.
2. Further information is available about the [legislation referred to in this case](#).
3. [Latest HSE press releases](#).

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