

Company fined after workers injured by explosion

A manufacturing company in West Yorkshire has been fined £200,000 after workers were seriously injured by an explosion.

Three workers at Weir Minerals Europe Limited sustained burns while operating a furnace at the firm's site on Halifax Road in Todmorden on 25 February 2020.

They had been melting a large amount of steel before an explosion took place in the furnace. It had most likely been caused by water entering the furnace while the workers were adding in the scrap metal.

The three men suffered burns to their faces, heads and backs. There was also resulting damage to the surrounding equipment.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that Weir Minerals Europe Limited was aware of the risk associated with wet scrap metal being added to the furnace. However the protection from rain that was in place at the time of the incident was not adequately implemented and maintained.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Molten metals industry – Safety topics \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/moltenmetals/)

Weir Minerals Europe Limited, of Halifax Road, Todmorden, West Yorkshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay £6,095 in costs at Bradford and Keighley Magistrates' Court on 5 September 2023.

HSE inspector Jackie Ferguson commented: "This was a serious incident that could so easily have been avoided. Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Matt Reynolds.

Notes to Editors:

1. The [Health and Safety Executive](https://www.hse.gov.uk/) (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. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. We do not have any pictures for this prosecution.