

Company fined for multiple safety failings

A company has been fined after multiple health and safety failings were found at a site in Bishop Auckland.

Acting on concerns raised, HSE visited the steel supplies site in 2019, finding wholly inadequate management of health and safety. It also came to light that two workers had been injured on separate occasions whilst operating machinery at the premises. In June 2019, an employee was struck and injured by a work piece and suffered an injury to his right hand. In July 2019, an agency worker suffered a finger amputation whilst manually removing a piece of metal near the unguarded blade of another machine.

An investigation by HSE found the company had failed to prevent access to the dangerous moving parts on both machines. These machines were metal rebar forming machines and had been used at the site for a number of years. In addition to the guarding faults, HSE also found the emergency stop and safety devices wired out on one of the machines.

Furthermore, the machinery risk assessments were substandard and staff were trained to operate the machines in an unsafe manner. The company also had a forklift truck in daily use, despite it having defective brakes.

Midland Steel Reinforcement Supplies (UK) Limited, of Flemington Industrial Estate, Motherwell pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Regulations 5(1) and 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and Regulation 9(3) of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

At Durham Crown Court the company was fined £450,000 and ordered to pay £41,23.51 costs.

After the hearing, HSE Inspector Clare Maltby said: “ Companies have a duty of care to those they employ and HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action.

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: Information about health and safety at work](#)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/