

Company fined for poor condition of asbestos containing materials

A company which manufactures and distributes furniture was fined £6,000 for failing to properly assess the risk from exposure to asbestos containing materials.

Glasgow Sheriff Court heard that, during an inspection on 6 August 2014, concerns were raised by a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector about significant damage to what appeared to be asbestos containing materials which were encasing the structural columns and beams of the premises.

An investigation by HSE found that Aquapac Limited failed to properly assess the risks to employees' exposure to asbestos containing materials and failed to take measures necessary to protect employees from exposure to asbestos. The investigation also found that the company failed to ensure that anyone working on the premises was aware of the presence of the material (to make sure that it was not disturbed and to deal with any inadvertent disturbance to prevent the spread of asbestos fibres).

Aquapac Limited of The Quadrangle, 59 Ruchill Street, Glasgow G20 9PX pleaded guilty to breaching of Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £6,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Russell Berry said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided had the company simply monitored the condition of the asbestos containing materials (ACMs) at their premises and had in place robust procedures to deal with any deterioration or damage to those ACMs.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate action against those that fall below the required standards."

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.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.