

Garage sentenced after mechanic suffers life-changing injuries in a fall

A garage has been fined after an employee suffered life changing injuries when he fell into a vehicle inspection pit.

Portsmouth Magistrates' Court heard how on 3 September 2018, an employee of GP Motors Works Ltd on the Isle of Wight fell into a vehicle inspection pit more than five feet deep whilst carrying out mechanical repairs to a nearby vehicle. The vehicle inspection pit was partially covered with a small vehicle leaving around seven feet of the pit uncovered and without any other measures in place to prevent exposing employees to an unnecessary fall risk. The employee sustained serious head and shoulder injuries, which required surgery.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to ensure the pit had any physical measures, such as barriers or pit covers, in place to prevent a person falling into it.

GP Motor Works Ltd of Embankment Road, Bembridge, Isle of Wight pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. They were fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £10,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Kate Clark said: "Serious injuries or death can be prevented if basic safeguards such as barriers or pit covers are put in place. There is clear guidance for garages about vehicle inspection pits."

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. HSE guidance and information about vehicle inspection pits can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg261.pdf>

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