

Sheetmetal fabrication company in court after worker's finger crushed

A company specialising in manufacturing canopies and ventilation ducting has been fined after an employee's hand was drawn into the rotating parts of a machine, resulting in serious injury.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard how on 14 October 2019, an apprentice of R Briggs Sheetmetal Fabrication Ltd, was instructed by another apprentice and a trainee on how to operate a swaging machine. This consisted of two rotating wheels controlled by a foot pedal, used to put a groove around a ducting tube. After carrying this process out on approximately four pieces of tubing, the apprentice was left to proceed on their own, unsupervised. Whilst continuing the task a the fabric safety glove worn by the apprentice caught in the rotating wheels of the machine. On releasing the foot pedal, the wheels took a few seconds to stop, drawing the apprentice's hand between them. The employee suffered from a crushed fingertip and a fracture. As a result of the incident the worker was unable to work for two months.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had not performed a risk assessment for using the machine or implemented any safe systems of work including recognising that the gloves presented a drawing-in and entanglement hazard on that machine. They did not provide staff with adequate training or assess the additional risks presented by a young, inexperienced person working with machinery and being unaware of existing or potential risks.

R.Briggs Sheetmetal Fabrication Ltd of Bond Street, Colne, Lancashire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £13,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,682.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Leanne Ratcliffe said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided. Employers should ensure they carry out an assessment of the risks and put in safe system of works for the operation of all machinery. Companies should be aware of their responsibility to recognise the way in which their employees are working. Employers should also be aware of the use of gloves when operating machinery where there is a risk of entanglement."

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.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/122.htm

National Apprenticeship Week 2022: Meet one of our apprentices!

I'm Jack Mellor and I've been part of HSE's Science Division – Health Capability Group for almost seven years. Our group provides scientific expertise and an analytical service to not only HSE but also our external customers with the extensive laboratory and world experts we have based in Buxton.



I'm currently studying towards a BSc in Chemical Science at Manchester Metropolitan University, which is being fully funded by HSE through the apprenticeships scheme. Not only is this a degree in itself but also a Laboratory Scientist Degree Apprenticeship, which means it additionally involves the practical laboratory skills/training element necessary for working within the chemical sciences sector. I'm able to put what I have learnt during my degree apprenticeship into practice at HSE during my typical working day, which is so rewarding. My course is heavily chemistry based and has given me the ability to now answer some of the questions that I have always wondered, such as, 'so why does that actually happen?'

The degree course is informative and can be extremely challenging at times, which is just how I like it. I currently spend twenty percent (one day) of my working week studying as part of the apprenticeship agreement with HSE and now, in my final year, I feel as though I know exactly how to blend it in with my work-life balance. From my experience over the last few years I

believe this is one of the keys to success when undertaking a course such as this.

Northern Gas Networks Ltd fined after fatal gas explosion

Northern Gas Networks Ltd were sentenced today for safety breaches after a fire and gas explosion at residential premises in Mirfield resulted in the death of the homeowner.

Leeds Crown Court heard that, on 11 February 2019, West Yorkshire Fire service were called to a fire and explosion in Huddersfield Road, Mirfield, West Yorks. The occupier, Elena Frunza, was discovered during a search of the property, whilst it was still on fire. She was taken to Pinderfields General Hospital where she died the following morning.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the source of the gas escape was identified as being from a fractured six inch cast iron main running under the carriageway to the front of the property. The investigation found that the main did not appear on Northern Gas Networks drawings and had therefore not been maintained in accordance with the Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996.

Northern Gas Networks Ltd of Thorpe Business Park, Colton, Leeds pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £5 million and ordered to pay costs of £91,487.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Neil Casey said: "This incident, that put the lives of the elderly residents of a care home at risk and cost a homeowner her life, has highlighted a failure by Northern Gas Networks Limited to follow their own safety procedures, in this case requiring the prompt and effective investigation and correction of anomalies in their records. Other gas network operators should take the opportunity to learn from this tragic incident."

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>[3]**

4. For further guidance on pipeline safety visit: [A guide to the Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996](#)

[Company fined after employee injured by a forklift truck](#)

A company specialising in interior and exterior stonework has been fined after an employee sustained serious injuries when he was struck by a forklift truck.

Peterborough Magistrates' Court heard how on 22 January 2019, an employee of Tudor Stonework Limited was injured whilst moving stone slabs during a lifting operation. The system of work required two operatives to walk in front of the forklift truck to steady a suspended load. However, during this operation the forklift truck ran over the foot of one of the operatives resulting in an open fracture to his left leg as well as crush injuries to his foot.

An investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found that the system of work for transporting stone slabs was not safe, as it required the operatives to be in close proximity to the moving forklift truck.

Tudor Stonework Limited of Silver Street, Enfield, Middlesex pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company was fined £466 and ordered to pay costs of £5,570.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Tom Pouncey said: "Industry practices should be reassessed where other stonemasons may be transporting stone slabs in a similar way.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement 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. www.hse.gov.uk

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations \(LOLER\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

[Farmer sentenced after walker killed by cattle](#)

Christopher Paul Sharpe, partner in J H Sharp and Son, has been sentenced for safety breaches after an 83-year-old man was fatally attacked by cattle.

Leeds Magistrates' Court heard how on 30 May 2020, David Tinniswood and his wife were attacked by cattle whilst following a public right of way across Ivescar Farm at Chapel-Le-Dale in Carnforth.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the couple were walking on a footpath that passed through the yard at Ivescar Farm, following a right of way that runs from the farm down to the road. They were accompanied by two border terriers. The couple were attacked by cattle that were grazing in the field with calves at foot. The 83-year-old man was trampled and pronounced dead at the scene and his wife sustained serious injuries.

Christopher Paul Sharpe of Ivescar Farm, Chapel le Dale, Carnforth, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (2) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He received a prison sentence of 12 weeks, suspended for 12 months, and was fined a total of £878 and was ordered to pay £7820.30 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Julian Franklin said: "A number of measures could have been taken to safeguard walkers using the path, while cattle and calves were grazing in that field.

"Firstly, not using that field for cattle and calves. Most farmers will have other groups of stock that can graze fields containing rights of way, so can reduce the risk of incidents by putting sheep in them, or they could take fodder crops from them. Cattle with calves can be put in fields without rights of way, away from members of the public, or can be segregated from walkers.

"Farmers should ensure they take all reasonably practicable precautions to protect walkers on public rights of way, especially when they are grazing cows and calves together, or bulls are present."

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^[1]

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [Cattle and public access in England and Wales \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://hse.gov.uk/cattle-public-access)^[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]