

# Company fined after worker suffered serious facial injuries

Manufacturing company, Acrivarn Ltd, was sentenced today for safety breaches after an employee using a 9-inch angle grinder suffered significant facial injuries when the cutting disc came into contact with his face.

Huddersfield Magistrates' Court heard how, on 23 July 2019, the injured person had been assigned the task of dismantling a mezzanine spray booth steel structure in the assembly workshop. To cut through the thicker parts of the steel structure he was using a Bosch nine-inch angle grinder with a steel-cutting disc attached. This equipment requires two hands to operate it.

In order to cut the steel on the higher parts of the booth the employee was using a stepladder and had attached himself to the hook of an overhead crane with a fall restraint harness he was wearing.

When he was standing on the ladder, attempting to cut through a piece of angled steel beam, the grinder kicked back at him and the cutting disc made contact with his face.

The cutting disc caused a deep laceration under his chin, through into his mouth which required 52 stitches. Nerves in his face were damaged, which caused a loss of feeling and movement in his lips and chin. He narrowly escaped making contact with his jugular vein.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the employee had only used the nine-inch angle grinder on one other occasion during his employment with Acrivarn Ltd and had never used it when working at height. At the time of the incident, Acrivarn Ltd had access to more appropriate oxyacetylene cutting equipment and trained operators of such equipment on site.

Acrivarn Ltd of South Park Mills, Hare Lane, Pudsey Leeds pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company has been fined £24,000 and ordered to pay £1,412.24 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector David Beaton said: "There was a significant risk of the angle grinder kicking back when cutting through the angled steel.

"Using the grinder at height affected the user's ability to resist kickback forces and placed him in a dangerous position.

"Working at height and demolition work needs to be properly planned, suitably and sufficiently assessed and the most appropriate equipment selected for the job."

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

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## [Builder fined after contractor suffers life-changing injuries in fall from roof](#)

A builder has been sentenced after a contractor fell eight metres from a roof at a site in Hove.

Brighton Magistrates Court heard how on the 28 June 2019, Mark Bucknall was working with another man to install rooflights to the flat roof of a loft conversion in Hove. To access the roof, they had to climb out of a window and up the original tiled roof.

When returning inside the property, the worker slipped and fell landing in the concrete yard of the neighbouring property. He sustained multiple fractures to his spine and right leg, and a fractured left heel and wrist. He is still recovering from the injuries and it is unknown if he will regain mobility.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found that the work was not properly planned. Earlier in the project, scaffold had been erected, but it was removed before the rooflights were delivered. No consideration was given to falling from the edge of the flat roof whilst installing the rooflights, or how they would safely access the roof.

Mark Bucknall of Holmes Avenue, Hove pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £1,760, ordered to pay £2,000 costs and £170 victim surcharge.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stephen Green, said "The worker's injuries are life changing and he could have easily been killed. This serious incident and devastation could have been avoided if basic means to enable

safe access and prevent falls, such as the scaffolding used earlier in the project, had been in place.”

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## [Company fined after subcontractor falls from height](#)

Solar panel company Blue Sun Energy Limited was sentenced today for safety breaches after a self-employed labourer fell through a rooflight.

Leeds Magistrates’ Court heard that on 13 December 2018, the 34-year-old, was working on behalf of and under the control of Blue Sun Energy Ltd when he fell approximately 3.5 metres through an unmarked and unguarded fragile surface (rooflight) into the shed below.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the worker was undertaking snagging work relating to the installation of solar panels on the roof of a cowshed at Home Farm Gargrave, Skipton. He stepped onto one of the roof lights and fell through it. He suffered a traumatic brain injury, fractured shoulder and severe bruising. He has yet to return to work.

Blue Sun Energy Limited of Avenue Road, Queniborough, Leicester pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £38,019 and ordered to pay £1,071 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ben Caines said: “Falls from height often result in life-changing or fatal injuries. In most cases, these incidents are needless and could be prevented by properly planning the work to ensure that effective preventative and protective measures are in place such as edge protection or coverings built to the correct standard.

“This incident could have easily been prevented if the company had installed adequate edge protection or covered the opening to prevent falls.”

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## [Recycling company fined after worker suffered life threatening injuries](#)

EPS Materials Recovery Limited has been fined after a worker suffered injuries to his face and head when he was struck by a ball of compressed metal weighing approximately half a tonne. The metal was being used as a brush attached to the grab of a 360 degree excavator machine.

Swansea Magistrates’ Court heard how on 8 May 2019, the employee was working in the vicinity of the grab machine. The driver swung the arm to the location of the employee and dropped the brush, in doing this the brush fell onto the worker striking him on the back and causing him to hit the floor with force. He suffered a fractured skull, a fractured eye-socket and fractured cheek bone.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to adequately segregate pedestrians and operating vehicles. Site induction procedures and training for new starters was inadequate. There wasn’t any direct supervision for new starters to prevent access to the dangerous parts of machinery or to stop dangerous parts before access was gained.

EPS Materials Recovery Limited of Griagola Wharf, King’s Dock, Swansea, was found guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were fined £300,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,059.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Wayne Williams, said: “Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and

to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of work.

“There is industry-produced guidance for this type of activity, which demonstrates how short the company fell of the required standard. If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented.”

The industry guidance for Hand sorting of Recyclables (Totting) with Vehicle Assistance can be found here:

<https://wishforum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/WASTE-18-.pdf>.

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## **[Logistics company fined after a worker was injured in explosion](#)**

A&D Logistics Limited, a national logistics haulier, has been fined after a worker suffered flash burn injuries when there was an explosion as he opened the door of a container.

Paisley Sheriff Court heard how, on 7 January 2019, a team leader was requested by a member of the management team to dry out condensation from the office accommodation container. The custom and practice within the yard was to use a propane fuelled open-flame gas torch attached to a 47Kg LPG cylinder which was left burning within the container.

The team leader did this work and returned four hours later to check on progress of the container. The door appeared closed further than when he had left it. He opened the door by putting his hand in the gap between the doors and pulling. There was an explosion and he was thrown by force against a

steel workshop container. Whilst on the ground he saw his arms burning, saw they were on fire, and felt the same of his face and hair.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company allowed the gas torch and propane cylinder to be left unattended with the torch lit whilst the team leader attended other work. The container did not contain sufficient oxygen to support safe combustion because of inadequate ventilation. Yard personnel had no 'hot work' training. The workwear worn by the team leader was not suitable for 'hot work' activities. Formal training and instruction for drying out wet containers with a propane gas torch was absent.

A&D Logistics Limited, Pegasus Avenue, Linwood, Paisley pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 of the Health and Safety at work etc Act 1974 and was fined £48,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Tom Allan said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out control measures and safe working practices.

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

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