

Furniture manufacturer fined after failing to manage employee's exposure of vibration

A North Wales company that manufactures sofas and chairs has been fined after failing to ensure that employee's exposure to the risks from vibrating tools was sufficiently risk assessed and managed.

Mold Magistrates' Court heard that Westbridge Furniture Designs Limited did not have a thorough risk assessment, adequate controls to manage exposure to vibration, or any health surveillance in place. They also failed to assess or take any action, following a diagnosis of carpal tunnel syndrome for two employees.

Following an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in January 2020, it was discovered that, despite a HSE intervention in 2016, the company failed to properly assess the levels of exposure to their employees. This resulted in at least two employees being expected to carry out their normal duties, even though they had been diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome. One of the employees has suffered permanent nerve damage and is no longer able to work.

Westbridge Furniture Designs Limited of Greenfield Business Park, Greenfield, Holywell pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £150,000.00 and ordered to pay costs of £14,033.50.

Speaking after the case, HSE inspector Sarah Baldwin-Jones, said: "This was a case of the company completely failing to grasp the importance of managing their employee's exposure to vibration, whilst using hand-held tools.

"Employers should conduct a full assessment of the vibration magnitude and exposure duration, before reviewing whether employees are at risk. There is a simple online calculator to help them complete this process. Had this company followed the free guidance, they would not have exposed many employees to risk and possibly have prevented the ill health that has been suffered."

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>

4. For more information about vibration tools in the workplace, visit:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/vibration.htm>

[Kent scaffolding company fined following collapse of scaffold](#)

A Kent company, RPS Scaffolding Ltd, has been fined following an incident where a scaffold the company erected collapsed, injuring two workers.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that on 10 August 2020, two individuals were injured when a scaffold they were working from on Thorpebank Road, London collapsed.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found RPS Scaffolding Ltd erected a scaffold to enable the exterior of the property to be decorated. The scaffold erected did not conform to standard configuration and it was erected without strength and stability calculations being carried out. Soon after the two individuals accessed the top lift of the scaffold it collapsed. One of them suffered a fractured shoulder, elbow and wrist while the other suffered a fractured shoulder.

RPS Scaffolding Ltd of 24 Chaplin Drive, Headcorn, Ashford, Kent pleaded guilty to a breach of Regulation 8(b)(ii) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The court fined them £40,000 and awarded full costs of £4,705.16.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Adam Thompson, commented: "The Work at Height Regulations are clear, where scaffolding is erected that does not conform with a generally recognised standard configuration then strength and stability calculations shall be carried out.

"RPS Scaffolding Ltd's failure to do this resulted in a scaffold that was unsuitable for its use that collapsed within the first morning of its use, injuring two people and putting the public at risk."



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 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. More information about working with scaffolds can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffoldinginfo.htm>
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[West Yorkshire companies fined after delivery driver injured by falling pallets](#)

Two West Yorkshire businesses, Brighouse Pallet Services Ltd and Seal It Services Ltd, have been fined for safety breaches after a HGV driver suffered a fracture to one of his neck vertebrae.

Leeds Magistrates' Court heard that on 5 August 2020 the delivery driver, an employee of Brighouse Pallet Services Ltd was struck by one or two falling pallets whilst they were being unloaded from a HGV trailer by a Seal It Services Ltd fork-lift truck (FLT) operator at the latter company's site at Elland.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that both companies failed in their duty to provide a safe system of work. They failed to put in place simple control measures to ensure that all delivery drivers who visited the Seal It Services Ltd site were moved to a safe location for waiting, whilst HGV trailers were being unloaded by FLTs.

Brighouse Pallet Services Ltd of Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £4,000 and ordered to pay £4806.60 in costs.

Seal It Services Ltd of Riverbank Way, Elland, West Yorkshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £4,654.90 in costs.

After the court hearing, HSE inspector David Welsh, said: "Loading and

unloading of HGVs by FLT's are among the most dangerous transport activities in the workplace. People can be hit by falling objects, struck by FLT's, or fall from vehicles.

"All such incidents can result in serious personal injury and the risks involved must be managed by all those who have legal duties for the safety of delivery drivers, both their employer and the sites they deliver to.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by implementing the simple control measure of keeping the delivery driver out of the area where the FLT was operating to maintain a safe system of work."

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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. More information about workplace transport safety <https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/power.htm>
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg136.htm>

[HSE publishes two restriction dossiers on lead in ammunition and substances in tattoo inks and permanent make-up \(PMU\)](#)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is opening a six-month public consultation on two restriction proposals.

Today (6 May), HSE published restriction dossiers on [lead in ammunition](#) and [substances in tattoo inks and PMU](#) following a request from the Defra Secretary of State, with agreement from the Scottish and Welsh Government.

Restrictions are developed to limit, ban or set conditions on the manufacture, placing on the market or use of a substance (or group of substances) that are of concern due to risks posed to human health and/or the environment.

HSE has proposed a restriction on hazardous substances present in tattoo inks and PMU as a precautionary measure to address potential risks to human health – there is currently no legislation in Great Britain that addresses the risks presented by insertion into the skin of these substances.

Dr Richard Daniels, HSE's Director of Chemicals Policy, said: "We want to ensure that the tattoo and permanent makeup industry continues to operate to world-leading safety standards and invite it to look closely at these proposed restrictions during the consultation period.

"The pigments used in tattoo inks and PMU are not necessarily produced specifically for tattooing. These pigments are often of low purity and can contain, intentionally or as an impurity, hazardous substances."

HSE has proposed a restriction on lead in ammunition after identifying there is an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment that is not adequately controlled.

Dr Daniels continued: "The harm of lead ammunition to wildfowl is of particular concern – poisoning from ingesting lead ammunition can cause long-term suffering and slow painful deaths for animals.

"Linked to this, the health of humans, particularly children, may also be adversely affected from eating meat killed with lead ammunition."

In compiling the two dossiers, HSE held a 60-day call for evidence on each proposal last year. HSE is now opening a six-month public consultation on each published dossier and invite interested parties to consider the questions posed to help HSE to form opinions on the proposed restrictions in the next stage of this process.

In forming opinions on whether to introduce the restrictions, HSE will engage with independent experts on the [REACH Independent Scientific Expert Pool \(RISEP\)](#), who will form a Challenge Panel to provide knowledge, scrutiny and challenge.

The public consultations for [lead in ammunition](#) and [substances in tattoo inks and PMU](#) can be found on Citizen Space.

Please click on the above links to take part in the six-month long public consultation.

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2. HSE is the Agency for UK REACH and therefore have responsibility for the

majority of the regulatory functions under UK REACH. In the delivery of these functions, HSE is supported by and/or reportable to a number of other government organisations.

3. HSE news releases are available at: <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

[Goat farming company fined after fatality](#)

Yorkshire Dairy Goats was sentenced for safety breaches after a farm worker was run over and fatally wounded.

Hull Crown Court heard that on 1 August 2018, 53-year-old Janet McDonald, an employee of Yorkshire Dairy Goats, was struck by a reversing telescopic materials handler vehicle (telehandler) whilst working at St Helen's Farm in York. She was seriously injured and air-lifted to Hull Royal Infirmary where she died later that day.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that when the employee had finished milking the goats, she walked through a corridor and stepped out into the path of the reversing telehandler. The driver was unable to see the worker so could not take action, and she was struck by the vehicle.

Yorkshire Dairy Goats of Seaton Ross, East Yorkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £180,000 and ordered to pay £20,000 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Taylor said: "Pedestrians and vehicles need to be kept apart at all work sites and this includes agriculture.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply segregating vehicles and pedestrians."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/^[2]

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]
4. Please see the link below to the page on HSE's website that is the best guide to doing it the right way:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/machinery/farm-vehicles.htm>