

[MOT centre sentenced after worker fatally injured in oil drum explosion](#)

An MOT centre has been sentenced after oil drums supplied by them exploded and killed an agricultural engineer.

Luton Magistrates' Court heard how on 21 April 2017, Christopher Chatfield, an experienced agricultural engineer, was making metal pheasant feeders for the local game shoot at Puddock Down Warboys, Cambridgeshire. This involved converting empty 200 litre oil containers by cutting open the lids using a plasma torch. While cutting open the third drum it violently exploded resulting in fatal injuries to Mr Chatfield.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the empty drums, labelled as having contained motor oil, were found to have also previously contained highly flammable gasoline, but had not been labelled correctly. The residual gasoline vapour present within the drums violently ignited upon the action of the hot cutting process, causing fatal injuries to Mr Chatfield. There was a failure to provide any labelling to show that the empty motor oil drums had been repurposed to store gasoline and this created a risk of fire and or explosion.

Stonehill MOT Centre Ltd of Stockley Meadows, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 6(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £80,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,167.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Parmjit Gahir said: "Those who are involved in the sale or supply of an article or substance, in this case used oil drums, have a responsibility to ensure that adequate information is provided so that the person buying the article can ensure that it can be safely used, cleaned and maintained.

"Failure to provide any labelling information on the used drums, to show that they had also contained gasoline, did not allow for the necessary precautions to be considered and adopted when cutting the drums open. If appropriate labelling had been in place this incident could have been avoided."

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. Hot work on small tanks and drums [Hot work on small tanks and drums \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
5. Storage of flammable liquids in containers [The storage of flammable liquids in containers – HSG51 \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

The post [MOT centre sentenced after worker fatally injured in oil drum explosion](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Garage door installer fined for asbestos safety failings](#)

A garage door installation company has been fined after failing to manage asbestos safely during work on a house in Bamber Bridge.

Preston Magistrates' Court heard how on 9 October 2019, two employees of Garage Doors (Northern) Ltd, were carrying out work to remove an existing integrated garage door and fit a new door at a property in Browndedge Lane, Bamber Bridge.

The workers removed old fittings from the side of the garage door with an angle grinder and some of the ceiling fittings with a crowbar. Holes were drilled into the ceiling to fit new roof bars and in doing so they caused damage to the ceiling, which was made of Asbestos Insulating Board (AIB).

The resulting dust containing asbestos fibres was spread through the house via the central heating system, resulting in the homeowner having to leave his home, and live in an hotel for eleven months, whilst the house was deep cleaned to remove all traces of asbestos fibres.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that despite undertaking work on a building built before 2000, a suitable and sufficient assessment to establish whether asbestos was liable to be present in the premises, and what type of asbestos containing material may have been present, was not carried out prior to the start of the job. Subsequent testing of the material came back positive for Chrysotile and Amosite.

Garage Doors (Northern) Limited of Aspden Street, Bamber Bridge, Preston pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6 (1) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,589.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stuart Hadfield said: "Exposure to asbestos is a serious health issue and without companies fully assessing the risk when carrying out intrusive work they are potentially putting their workers and members of the public at risk.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by identifying the presence

of asbestos and putting in place the correct control measures and safe working practices to prevent the release of, and exposure to, asbestos.

“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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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. More information regarding asbestos health and safety can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/>
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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[Plastic Coated Fabric Manufacturing company in Lancashire fined after machine incident](#)

A Lancashire based manufacturer of plastic-coated fabrics has been fined after an employee’s hand was drawn into an unguarded part of a machine, resulting in the surgical amputation of three fingers.

Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard that on 20 August 2019, a machine operator at the Earby site, was carrying out work activities on a large embossing machine, known as the Briem machine, when his hand became drawn into the nip point between two counter rotating rollers; referred to as the shell and the bole.

For product quality, the shell roller needed to be kept at an ice-cold temperature. This was achieved by using water cooled from a chiller unit, situated outside the building. Previous incidents leading up to the incident of the chiller “cutting out” had therefore made it custom and practice for

the operators to check the temperature of the moving roller by hand. This resulted in the irreversible crush injuries to the operative's right hand.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that there was insufficient guarding to the machine with at least four exposed nip points and a heavy reliance on training rather than engineering controls, such as fixed guarding.

Following the incident, the company undertook remedial measures to ensure machinery safety, including suitable guarding to prevent access to dangerous parts of the machine.

The company Uniroyal Global Ltd, West Craven Drive, Earby, Barnoldswick, BB18 6JZ, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,462.75.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Leona Cameron commented: "A number of unsafe practices were uncovered.

"This included unguarded access to the dangerous parts of the Briem machine, failings in maintenance and the quality of the risk assessment process in allowing an unsafe working practice to develop.

"For example, the company had identified the risk of entanglement from in-running nips, but had chosen not to take practicable measures to prevent such risk.

"If suitable guarding and robust maintenance procedures been in place, then the life changing injuries to the operative would not have occurred."

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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 and advice on working with machinery, please visit our website here: [Safety topics – Working with machinery \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://Safety%20topics%20-%20Working%20with%20machinery%20(hse.gov.uk))

The post [Plastic Coated Fabric Manufacturing company in Lancashire fined after machine incident](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Plumbing supply company and contractor fined after building collapse](#)

A plumbing supply company and its building contractor have been fined after unsafe construction work took place at the company premises in Burnley.

Burnley Magistrates' Court heard that on 21 October 2018, Northwest Plumbing Supplier Limited and contractor Daniel Georghiou, carried out construction work on their retail building without measures to adequately plan, manage and monitor the work, including protecting members of the public and operatives on site. As a result work was carried out in an unsafe manner and a large section of System House at the junction of Accrington Road and Rose Grove in Burnley collapsed into the adjacent car park and across the main road.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Northwest Plumbing Supplier Limited failed to appoint a contractor with the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and organisational capability; and failed to adequately plan and manage the project. Mr Georghiou hired and sourced equipment and material to complete the building work, but failed to ensure the structural integrity of the building and ensure lifting operations were carried out in a safe manner putting members of the public at risk.

Northwest Plumbing Supplier Limited of Accrington Road, Burnley pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company was fined £75,000 and ordered to pay costs of £10,843.

Daniel Georghiou of Accrington, Burnley pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (2) of Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment suspended for 18 months and was ordered to pay costs of £750.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Jacqueline Western said: "This was a very serious incident, it is fortunate that nobody was injured and it

occurred on a Sunday when the level of traffic on the main road was low. The consequences could have been much graver had the building collapsed onto a vehicle.

“This situation could so easily have been avoided by ensuring someone competent was carrying out the work in a planned and organised manner.

“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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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 and guidance on construction sites can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis63.pdf and www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis80.pdf

The post [Plumbing supply company and contractor fined after building collapse](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

New tools to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace

Employers are being urged to review the stress-causing factors in their workplaces and the work that their employees do.

Stress, depression or anxiety account for 51% of all work-related ill health cases and 55% of all working days lost due to work-related ill health. Stress impacts on all sectors and businesses of all sizes and employers have a legal duty to protect employees from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting on it.

Evidence shows that there are six key factors which, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health, lower productivity and increased accident and sickness absence rates.

The six key factors are:

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control:** how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources available to workers
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- **Change:** how change (large or small) is managed and communicated.

Rob Vondy, Head of Stress and Mental Health Policy at HSE, says: "It's well known that stress can make you ill. We know that work-related stress depression and anxiety has increased in recent years, and the last year has presented new challenges that have never been faced before, and which may affect the workplaces of the UK for some time to come.

"Good communication is vital as stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. If you don't understand the problem or its extent, tackling it will be more difficult. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether an employee can cope. People feel stress when they can't cope with the pressures or demands put on them, either in work or other outside issues. Start talking to your colleagues about any issues now – the earlier a problem is tackled the less impact it will have.

"Employers should match demands to employees' skills and knowledge. Recognising the signs of stress will help employers to take steps to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace. Healthy and safe work and workplaces are good for business and good for workers."

HSE has a range of practical support and guidance available including risk assessment templates, a talking toolkit to help start conversations,

workbooks, posters, a new mobile app and a new automated stress indicator tool (SIT). For more information see the [stress section at www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

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2. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
3. April marks Stress Awareness Month
4. The [Stress indicator tool \(SIT\)](#) measures the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards work-related stress and is free to use for up to 50 employees.
5. The [Mobile app](#) is primarily for small and medium sized businesses to help them better understand the law and what is required to protect employees.

The post [New tools to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).