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A leading workwear company has been fined £400,000 after an employee had the skin ripped off the palm of her left hand.

Sharon Chaplin, 51, was working an evening shift for Johnsons Textile Services Limited at the company's site in Burbage, Hinckley on 16 December 2021.

The mother of two, from Barwell in Leicestershire, was trying to manually clean a sensor to initiate movement of a conveyor belt, but as she did so, her left hand was drawn into a gap where two conveyor belts meet.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Johnsons Textile Services Limited had inadequately guarded machinery, did not have a suitable and sufficient [risk assessment for the machinery](#) that caused the injury and inadequate health and safety management systems in place.

Johnsons Textile Services Limited, of Logix Road, Burbage, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER).

The company was fined £400,000 and was ordered to pay £5,919.63 costs at a hearing at Leicester Magistrates Court on 12 July 2023.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Nicholas Moreby said "This injury was easily preventable by applying known standards of machinery guarding and the risk should have been identified. Employers should make sure they properly assess risk and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery".

"The fine imposed on them should underline to all employers that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously.

"We will not hesitate to take action against companies which do not do all that they should to keep people safe."

This prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyers Karen Park and Nathan Cook.

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.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.

4. HSE guidance on [equipment and machinery](#) is available.