

Insulation firm fined after employee suffered serious hand injury

A manufacturer of industrial insulation has been fined after an employee suffered serious injuries to his hand while trying to clear a blockage from a machine.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard that the employee was working at Kingspan Industrial Insulation Limited's factory in Derbyshire when a cutting machine became blocked. Kingspan produce a variety of pipe insulation for industrial use, resins and other substances are blended then poured into a foil outer layer before being baked to become rigid foam insulation. The outer foil 'skin' then needs trimming to get rid of the excess. The excess foil is extracted away from the process and cut into smaller pieces by a cutter.

On the night of the 18 August 2018, the cutter became blocked, the worker had seen others unblock the cutter so isolated the cutter and started to unblock it himself. However, he had only isolated the fan and as he was looking down the pipe to identify the location of the blockage, his left hand came into contact with the rotating blade causing the loss of a finger and other serious injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to provide sufficient information, instructions and supervision for the clearing of blockages. Operators were undertaking the task with inadequate awareness of the risks, resulting in an injury to an employee.

Kingspan Industrial Insulation Limited of Glossop Brook Road, Glossop, Derbyshire pleaded guilty of a breach of section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at work etc. Act 1974. The company were fined £80,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,988.45.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Lindsay Bentley said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to provide the necessary information, instructions and supervision to their workers about the safe system of working. If adequate information, instructions and supervision had been provided prior to the incident, the injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

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. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
 3. For HSE's working safely guidance see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

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