

Leading textiles firm hit with £100,000 fine after worker loses hand

A linen services company has been fined £100,000 after a man's hand had to be amputated.

Scott Drummond, from Rhyl, North Wales, suffered serious injuries to his hand after it became trapped in machinery at the laundry operated by Johnsons Textile Services Limited in Bumpers Lane, Chester, on 24 June 2021. The injuries were so serious that his hand was later surgically amputated above the wrist.

Guidance on [working safely with machinery](#) is available.

The 45-year-old had been investigating a fault on a large commercial dryer when he was caught by the machine. He had been working on a step ladder and as he lost his balance, reaching out to prevent a fall, resulting in his arm being crushed by the mechanism. He was left trapped and in extreme pain as he tried to call for help.

The moving parts of the dryer were unguarded, and although there was a one metre exclusion rule around the machine, this was vague and took no account of a person making an involuntary movement towards the danger area.

In a statement to the court, Mr Drummond said: "Health and safety shouldn't be about cost, it should be about keeping everyone safe.

"I should have been able to come home from work safely, but I was left with an injury that I'll have to manage for the rest of my life.

"I am making this statement in the hope that what has happened to me doesn't happen to anyone else."

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Johnsons Textile Services Limited of Monks Way, Preston Brook, Cheshire, had not fully assessed the risks involved, had not provided suitable guarding, and failed to put in place an adequate safe system of work.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company was fined £100,000 and was ordered to pay £10,741.69 costs at a hearing at Chester Magistrates on 11 December 2023.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Thomas Delroy said: "Scott's injuries are truly life changing. This serious incident and its devastating consequences could have been avoided if basic safeguards had been put in place.

"Here at HSE we would like to highlight that all employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery."

The prosecution was led by HSE enforcement lawyer Kate Harney.

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.