

Local Authority fined after a boy received chemical burns

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar is the local authority which covers the Western Isles and was today fined £12,000 after a boy received chemical burns.

Stornoway Sheriff Court heard that on 11 July 2017 after employees of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar had cleaned the slipway and steps of the pier at Valtos Pier, Uig using sodium hypochlorite two children (a boy aged 9 and a girl aged 12), who were later crabbing on the steps of the pier, and the hospital later confirmed that the boy had sustained a chemical burn from the sodium hypochlorite.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that due to the Council's failure to wash away the solution or cordon off the area that the two children were able to access the area and the boy received burns.

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar of Sandwick Road, Stornoway pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were fined £12,000 and a compensation order was made in favour of the boy for £6,000

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Kim Munro said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

"Employers should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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>