

Manufacturer fined after an employee suffered crush injuries

A manufacturer of carbon-based products, SGL Carbon Fibres Limited (SGL), has been fined following an incident where an employee sustained soft tissue injuries to his right hip and a fracture to his lower right leg.

Inverness Sheriff Court heard that, on 25 April 2016, Mr Cameron Fraser was working at SGL, Great North Road, Muir of Ord Industrial Estate, Muir of Ord, Ross-shire, carrying out maintenance work on equipment known as a Regenerative Thermal Oxidiser (RTO). Whilst inside the RTO Mr Fraser had become trapped between a moving poppet valve and the valve seat.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that SGL Carbon Fibres Limited had failed to take measures to prevent access to dangerous parts of the machinery. No risk assessment was undertaken to identify any specific risks beyond the general ones mentioned on the Permit to Work documentation. Pre-existing relevant procedures were not implemented. A task of this nature should have been clearly supervised, informed by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and consequent work instructions, with appropriate supervision and monitoring to ensure the identified safe system of work was implemented. This was not done.

SGL Carbon Fibres Limited of Great North Road, Muir of Ord Industrial Estate, Muir of Ord, Ross-shire pled guilty to breaching The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, Regulation 11(1) and (2) and Section 33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974 and was fined £12,000.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Mac Young said: "This injury was easily preventable. Employers should make sure they properly assess risks and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery."

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>

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