

Powder Coating company fined after worker suffers serious back injury

A powder coating company has been fined after a worker in a factory in Poole, Dorset suffered shattered lumbar vertebrae and had to be kept in a lying down position on his back for two weeks in hospital.

Southampton Magistrates' Court heard how on 27 July 2017, the worker was checking the straps on a wheeled A-frame trolley containing ten 6m long twin wall polycarbonate sheets weighing 34kg each, when the load unexpectedly toppled onto him pushing him to the ground. Colleagues had to lift the sheets off the worker and call for an ambulance.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that C & R Powder Coating and Welding Fabrication Ltd had failed to ensure the safety of workers, engaged in the transfer and storage of plastic sheeting on a trolley. The investigation found that the trolley was not suitable for the storage and transport of the plastic sheets because it was not sufficiently long enough and had no means for ensuring the straps being used would stay in place.

C & R Powder Coating and Welding Fabrication Ltd of 4 – 6 The Wharf Centre, Wharf Street, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV34 5LB pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 of The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER). The company has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £10,338.20.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Berenice Ray, said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out safe working practices and ensuring work equipment is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used.

"Accidents like this can happen with plastic sheets but equally with wood board, steel plate or stone slabs. Any flat profile material should be secured against falling or slipping out as the consequences can be a serious injury or even a fatality.

"Companies 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. 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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