

Sawmill fined after worker's finger is severed in machinery

A sawmill has been fined after a worker injured his finger when his hand came into contact with the moving parts of a machine.

Plymouth Magistrates' court heard how, on 20 March 2018, an employee of Truro Sawmills was examining the moving parts at the rear of a saw to check why it had been cutting inaccurately. The saw remained in operation while he did so, and his glove became caught in the moving parts causing him to sever his index finger on his left hand.

An investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to ensure that access to a cross-cut saw's dangerous moving parts was prevented by the use of a guard, and failed to deliver adequate training to their employees.

Truro Sawmills of Pendale, Penhallow, Truro, Cornwall pleaded guilty of breaching Regulation 11 (1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. The company was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £15,594.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Melissa Lai-Hung said: "This injury was easily preventable. Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.

"Those in control have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers."

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>