

Sports nutrition supplier in court after worker loses fingers

A Liverpool sports nutrition product supplier has been fined after an employee had three fingers of their right hand severed whilst cleaning a screw conveyor.

Liverpool Magistrates Court heard how, on the 13 September 2019, a production operative, employed by Applied Nutrition Ltd at their Webber Estate site in Knowsley, was cleaning one of the product transfer screws. The operative had switched off the screw at the control panel, but had not switched off the machine at the main electricity supply. After cleaning the screw, the operative went to replace it. However, the power had inadvertently been turned back on and the screw began to operate when it came into contact with the drive motor. This resulted in the severing of three fingers and part of the palm of the operative's right hand. He remained in hospital for eight days and has since undergone several operations. The injury has significantly changed the man's life and has impacted on daily tasks and restricted the leisure activities he used to take part in.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had no risk assessments or safe systems of work in place. They did not provide staff with adequate training or make them aware of the dangers associated with the machinery being cleaned. Had there been a risk assessment performed by the company regarding the danger associated with cleaning the screw conveyor, an industry standard lock off system at the power supply could have been installed preventing the incident.

Applied Nutrition Ltd of 2 Acornfield Road, Knowsley Industrial Park, Liverpool, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £70,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,551.10.

After the hearing, HSE inspector David Bellis said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided. Employers should carry out an assessment of the risks and put in safe system of works for the operation of all machinery, including tasks such as cleaning. Employers should also ensure that adequate information, instruction and training is provided to all who use it."

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: [Why is machinery safety important? \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk/why-is-machinery-safety-important/)

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>