

Firm failed to control risks to employees from vibration

Two partners in a construction firm have been fined for failing to adequately control the risk to its employees from exposure to vibration when using vibrating tools.

Employees of Roywood Contractors worked at various construction sites using vibrating tools without adequate control. As a result, an employee who had been working at the company for 12 years suffered significant ill-health from hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that on or before the 15 January 2020 the company failed to adequately assess the risk to employees from exposure to vibration.

They did not have appropriate measures to control exposure or place employees under suitable health surveillance to monitor their condition.

Andrew Hatto and Paul Kiff, trading as Roywood Contractors, of Tilford Road, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6 (1) and 7 (1) of the Control of Vibration Regulations 2005. They were each fined £1,150 and ordered to pay costs of £3,500 each at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court on September 20.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Leah Sullivan said: "This was a case of the company completely failing to grasp the importance of hand-arm vibration syndrome health surveillance.

"If they had understood why health surveillance was necessary, it would have ensured that it had the right systems in place to monitor worker's health and the employee's condition would not have been allowed to develop to a severe and life altering stage."

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](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
 2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
 3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
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Company fined £200,000 after worker injured cleaning machinery

A company specialising in the manufacture of stabilisers and additives used in plastic products has been fined £200,000 after an employee suffered serious hand injuries while cleaning machinery.

An employee of Mexichem Specialty Compounds Limited was cleaning the manufacturing line at their site in Chinley, Derbyshire on 21 February 2019 when he was injured. Tonne bags are loaded into a hopper on the line and passed through a rotary valve into final product bags.

The man was attempting to clean a rotary valve, standing with one foot on the machinery framework and the other on a ladder, when he slipped.

As he tried to steady himself, his right hand went into the unguarded rotary valve resulting in a severed fingertip and lacerations to his hand.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company did not have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment or safe system of work in place for cleaning the bagging line.

Operators were also not provided with appropriate information, instruction, and training on how the line should be cleaned. The rotary valve was not guarded and there was no isolation procedure in place for when cleaning was taking place.

The system of work in place at the time of the incident involved working at height, this had not been properly planned.

Mexichem Specialty Compounds Limited, of Beler Way, Melton Mowbray, pleaded guilty to contravening Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,846.78 at Derby Magistrates Court on 6 September 2022.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Lindsay Bentley said: "All operations and tasks, including cleaning, should be risk assessed. A safe system of work should have been produced and communicated to all operators.

"There is plenty of guidance available on the HSE website to help companies implement good health and safety arrangements to prevent such incidents."

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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>
4. Links to further guidance can be found at:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf> – Risk Assessment – A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace,
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l22.pdf> – Safe use of work equipment – Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998,
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf> – Working at height – A brief guide

[HSE to prosecute Alexandra Homes Bristol Limited](#)

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecution is being brought against Alexandra Homes (Bristol) Limited. This follows the death of 18-year-old Melissa Mathieson after she was discovered unconscious at the Alexandra House care home, Knowle, Bristol on 12 October 2014.

Alexandra Homes (Bristol) Limited, of Wells Road, Knowle, Bristol will face charges under Sections 2(1) and 3(1) Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Yvonne Hin, a former care home manager of Avenue Road, Ilfracombe will also face a charge under Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

The charges follow a complex and sensitive enquiry, initially led by the Police.

The first hearing is due to take place on 5 October 2022 at Bristol Magistrates' Court.

Notes to editors

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 2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
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Company fined after employee becomes drawn into a machine

A manufacturer of paper and paperboard has been fined after an employee was injured when they were drawn into a large paper re-winding machine.

On 19 July 2021 a male employee of Amberset Limited based in Ashford, Kent, sustained injuries of three broken bones in their shoulder, bruising of the elbow and wrist and superficial damage to their head. The man then underwent surgery following the incident, where metal plates and pins were fitted in his shoulder and arm.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the paper rewinder was not suitably guarded and this had been the case since August 1998. The rewinder allowed access to dangerous parts of machinery at various places including the front of the rewinder where the employee was drawn by their hand between two exposed rollers.

At Folkestone Magistrates Court on 21 September Amberset Limited pleaded guilty to breaching regulation 11(1)(a) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay full costs of £2,197.65.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Peter Bruce said: "Employers should regularly review the safety measures on their plant and equipment to ensure that access to dangerous parts is prevented. The guidance on safe operation of paper rewinders is well established as is the law and guidance on guarding dangerous parts of machinery.

"Employees should be prevented from getting into a position where they can come into contact with dangerous parts of machinery.

"It is fortunate that the quick action of the employee's colleagues in stopping the machine, ensured that they were not pulled further into the machine as their injuries could have been much worse if not fatal."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: gov.uk/
 3. Guidance on health and safety and guarding paper winders safely can be found here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web07.pdf>,
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg279.pdf>
<https://www.paper.org.uk/CPI/CPI/Content/The-Paper-Industry/Health-and-Safety.aspx?hkey=e545e6a5-c5c3-4707-ae7c-6731544b6a11>.
 4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
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[Engineering company hit with fine after man installing bird deterrent spikes fell from roof](#)

An engineering company has been fined after one of its employees fell through a roof while installing bird deterrent spikes.

On 13 May 2020, a man working for Craven and Nicholas (Engineering) Ltd on St John's Road in Boston, stepped onto a fragile roof surface and fell six metres through it – suffering serious injuries to his head and left arm.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that this task was not part of the normal work for employees of the company and they had not properly risk assessed and planned the work at height.

The lack of planning meant that reasonably practicable and recognised control measures that could have prevented the man falling from height, such as the use of purpose designed access equipment and over-boarding of fragile roof surfaces, had not been implemented.

At Lincoln Magistrates Court on Wednesday 21 September, Craven and Nicholas (Engineering) Ltd of St Johns Road in Boston pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(c) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. They were fined £14,000 and also ordered to pay £6,541.80 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Tim Nicholson said: “Where work at height cannot be avoided, it should be properly planned, adequately supervised and carried out in a safe manner using appropriate equipment.

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

“There is a significant amount of guidance available to help companies protect employees when working at height on the HSE website.”

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. Further guidance about working at height and the regulations involved can be found at Working at height: [Health and Safety: Working at height \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk/working-at-height)
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>