

# Manufacturer fined £100,000 after worker partially severs two fingers

A Welshpool manufacturing company has been fined £100,000 after one of its employees partially severed two fingers while trying to find a fault in a machine.

Interior Products Group Limited (known as Newmor Group Ltd at the time of the incident) manufacture and sell pre-finished fit out products to a variety of sectors.

The experienced employee, from Wrexham, was attempting [to identify a fault in an edgebander machine](#) – used to apply edging tape to the raw edges of wood panels with a hot-melt adhesive or glue.

Wrexham Magistrates' Court heard how the experienced employee suffered the injuries while checking for debris on the trimming unit of the edgebander. Having failed to turn the machine off correctly before raising it to look inside, the worker then stepped over two supporting rails and placed their fingers on a trimming unit, resulting in two being partially severed.

Following an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), it was discovered that although the company had carried out a number of risk assessments on the machine, they failed to identify the hazards presented by the cutting and trimming units from the front of the edgebander. They also failed to provide suitable and sufficient, information, instruction and training to enable their staff to carry out activities such as cleaning, fault finding and minor repairs safely.

Interior Products Group Limited of Madocs Works, Henfaes Lane, Welshpool pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,688.

Speaking after the case HSE inspector Joe Boast said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in that safe system of working.

"If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

## **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.

2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
  3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
  4. Guidance on [working safely with machinery](#) is available.
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## [Devon dad has every finger amputated after hands crushed in machine](#)

A dad from Devon was left with horrific injuries to his hands after an incident at his work.

Dean Delahaye, from Barnstaple, had to have all eight fingers amputated after his hands were crushed by a metal rolling machine.

The 35-year-old worked for flue and chimney manufacturer SF Limited. He was feeding flat metal sheeting into the machine when the incident took place on 5 September 2019. He spent 54 days in hospital and had numerous operations. More than three years on, he is still waiting for prosthetics to be fitted.



Dean Delahaye from Barnstaple suffered horrific injuries at work

“I still get very frustrated and have a sense of uselessness,” he said.

“I am frustrated with how long things are taking, and how things have been put on hold.

“Having no fingers means I am unable to grip things.

"Before my accident I enjoyed playing a wide range of sports, including football, tennis and squash.

"I have always enjoyed working with my hands and have only ever had manual jobs, but since the accident it will never be possible to return to doing this again.

"Before my accident I was an independent and sociable person, but I feel this has been taken away from me now."

Due to the severity of his injuries, Mr Delahaye went on to say how he was even unable to pick up and feed his daughter, who was born after the incident.

"It makes me feel like a burden to my loved ones, with all the assistance I need daily," he said.

"My wife Jess not only has to care for me, but is also like a single parent which makes me feel so worthless.

"Mentally I have not come to terms with my new reality.

"When I dream, I am fully able-bodied and then I wake and realise this is never going to be the case for me again.

"But if my accident can stop someone going through what I have had to go through, then at least it will be for something."



Dean Delahaye said his life has never been the same since he suffered horrific injuries at work

Yeovil Magistrates Court heard that an investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to adequately assess the risks

and implement the necessary controls when the roller equipment was installed. They subsequently missed a further opportunity to reassess the risks following a significant change in the way in which the machine was operated.

S F Limited which trades as SFL Flue and Chimney of Pottington Business Park, Barnstaple, Devon, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £26,000 and ordered to pay costs of £12,000.

After the hearing HSE inspector Paul Mannell said: "Dean's injuries were easily preventable.

"Employers must identify the risks posed by dangerous parts of machinery and ensure that relevant controls are implemented to minimise the potential for harm.

"Where the way in which machinery is used changes, the assessment and controls should be updated to ensure employees can work safely and without risk of injury."

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## **[Company fined after reactor explosion](#)**

A Northwest manufacturing company has been fined after an explosion led to a reactor bursting open and ejecting a motor through a roof.

Fortunately, nobody was injured as a result of the incident, which happened at CatAlloy Limited based in Widnes on 3 December 2015, during the manufacture of nickel catalyst.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found how air drawn into the reactor mixed with hydrogen, causing overpressure that led to the explosion.

The lid of the reactor burst open and the gearbox and the electric drive

motor, situated on top of it, were ejected through the roof of the building after breaking their mountings.

The investigation also found that a residual product had been left in the reactor – which can ignite when exposed to air.

At Liverpool Crown Court CatAlloy Limited of Moss Bank Road, Widnes, pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2 (1) and 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. They were fined £120,000 and ordered to pay costs of £50,000

After the hearing HSE inspector Sean Bembridge said: “This incident could so easily have been avoided by implementing appropriate control measures and safe working practices.

“At all times during the activation process, a material risk to health and safety existed.

“The defendant had a duty to take measures to ensure that this risk was reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level.”

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](http://legislation.gov.uk/)
3. Further guidance on how to avoid incidents such as this can be found at [Reducing error and influencing behaviour – HSG48 \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://hse.gov.uk/hsg48) / [Designing and operating safe chemical reaction processes – HSG143 \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://hse.gov.uk/hsg143)
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## **[Spring manufacturer sentenced after worker severs fingers](#)**

A spring manufacturing company has been fined after an employee had two fingers of his right hand severed whilst attempting to lubricate a bandsaw.

Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard how on 2 October 2019, a labourer employed by Hanson Springs Ltd in Rochdale was assisting in the cutting back department to cut sections of steel spring using a vertical bandsaw when the

blade began to smoke and squeal. The worker decided to replace the blade, as on inspection it appeared heavily worn. He attempted to lubricate the new blade, by pressing a cardboard tube of wax onto the exposed section of it whilst it ran. The tube was drawn in, in turn drawing in the worker's hand, severing the middle two fingers at the first and second knuckle respectively.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that although the worker had received training from the supervisor in using the machine, it was of poor quality, no formal competency assessment had been carried out, nor was he certain that he could use the machine unsupervised. Furthermore, despite lubrication of the blades in this manner being standard practice within the company, it was unnecessary as the machine was self-lubricating. The worker had been shown how to do this during training in order to minimise the time needed for the blade to become greased using the inbuilt lubrication system and therefore operational. Operational management was not aware of this dangerous practice and therefore no safe method of lubricating the blades had been provided.

Hanson Springs Ltd of Hanson Place, Gorrells Way, Rochdale, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,394.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Peter Lennon said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided.

"Employers should ensure they carry out an assessment of the risks and put in safe system of works for the operation of all machinery.

"Employers should also ensure that adequate supervision, instruction and training is provided to workers."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/safety.htm>
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## [South Yorkshire businesses targeted](#)

# for health and safety inspection

- 22 inspectors dispatched to carry out inspections in Sheffield and Rotherham.
- 12 fatalities and 594 serious injuries reported in five years.
- HSE will take enforcement action if it identifies areas of concern.
- 12,000 UK workers died from occupational lung diseases in 2020

Britain's workplace regulator is set to clamp down on businesses in Sheffield and Rotherham after a sharp increase in the number of serious and fatal incidents noted by its inspectors within the last five years.

There were 12 worker deaths reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – under the “[RIDDOR](#)” regulations – in Sheffield and Rotherham between 2014 and 2021 and a further 594 serious injuries reported over the same period. Inspection teams will primarily focus on conducting inspections on businesses where workers regularly undertake welding and use metalworking fluids, a high proportion of which are based in the area.

In 2020 around 12,000 people in the UK died from [lung diseases](#) likely to be linked to past exposure from work. There is scientific evidence to suggest that exposure to [welding](#) fumes can cause lung cancer and exposure to [metalworking fluids](#) can cause a range of lung diseases.

From today, Monday 10 January 2022, 22 inspectors from HSE's Yorkshire and North East field operations teams will visit more than 70 local business, identified by HSE's targeting and intelligence team as operating in a high risk sector or performing poorly. The businesses span a wide range of sectors including metal fabrication, engineering, general manufacturing, waste and recycling. The operation will last for a week.

Andrew Denison, Acting Head of Operations said: “It is estimated that each year 12,000 workers die in Britain from occupational lung disease and 17,000 new cases report suffering work-related breathing and lung problems. This part of South Yorkshire has a fine tradition in metal fabrication and manufacturing; we just need to ensure that the innovation continues to extend to safe working practice.

“Local inspectors have witnessed an alarming rise in the number of fatalities and injuries in the Sheffield and Rotherham area in the last five years. This initiative will ensure that inspectors are able to visit sites and speak with duty holders to ensure the appropriate controls are in place to protect their workers' health and safety, particularly in relation to the risks from occupational lung disease. “

During the visits the companies will need to demonstrate that they have measures in place to manage risks to protect the health and well-being of their workers including health conditions such as occupational lung disease.

If an HSE inspector identifies any other areas of concern during an inspection, they will take the necessary enforcement action which in some cases may lead to an Enforcement Notice being served or, in the case of serious breaches, a prosecution.

Ends

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