

Animal feed company fined after serious injury to employee

An animal feed processing company has been fined following an incident where part of an employee's arm was severed by a moving conveyor.

Chesterfield Justice Centre heard how, on 09 December 2018, the employee had opened the inspection hatch on a closed conveyor in order to clear a blockage at the site in Killamarsh, Derbyshire. The conveyor started unexpectedly, severing the employee's right arm below the elbow.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company did not have a documented safe system of work for clearing these blockages which occurred on a recurrent basis on this conveyor as well as others at the site. This meant there was no reference, no training material or procedure that could be monitored, as a result different practices developed over time.

The company did not appear to be aware that blockages were cleared in this unsafe manner. Had a suitable and sufficient risk assessment been completed, the company should have identified that there was a risk to employees created by intervention in the machine when blockage clearance was required and developed appropriate instruction, training and information related to the task.

Hi Peak Feeds Limited of Sheffield Road, Killamarsh, Derbyshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. It was fined £140,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,591.30.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Lindsay Bentley said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided through the implementation of a safe system of work involving effective plant isolation and adherence to safe working practices."

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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