

# Company fined as worker has leg amputated

A company that grows mushrooms has been fined after an employee's leg became trapped in a machine and was later amputated.

Luka Illic's right leg was caught by the rotating blades of a mushroom filling machine and became stuck in the device's moving parts on 16 October 2019.

He was part of a team of three at Howden Enterprises Ltd, trading under the name Hughes Mushrooms, that were cleaning the machine at the firm's premises in Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, East Yorkshire.



Filling machine

The then 29-year-old climbed onto the machine, which is used to prepare and fill compost in growing trays, to remove the last remaining parts of the compost.

The machine was then turned on, leading to Mr Illic's leg being caught by the rotating blades in the mixing axle and becoming trapped.



His leg was later amputated below the knee at hospital.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into this incident found Howden Enterprises Ltd failed to adequately assess the operation of the filling machine, in particular the cleaning of the machine. The firm failed to ensure there robust isolation and safe operating procedures were in place and followed.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 \(PUWER\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/puwr/)

Howden Enterprises Ltd, of Trew Mount Road, Dungannon, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £73,333.00 and ordered to pay £7,522.60 in costs at Hull and Holderness Magistrates Court on 10 April 2024.

HSE inspector Louise Redgrove said: “The importance of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment which reflects all actual practical activities cannot be underestimated. It is vital to ensure there are effective systems of work and physical controls which are implemented, supervised and used by all those involved. This incident could have easily been avoided with a robust isolation procedure and padlock for each worker involved.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Iain Jordan and supported by HSE paralegal officer Rebecca Whithell.

#### **Notes to editors:**

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](https://www.hse.gov.uk/) (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.