

Company prosecuted after worker killed

RRS London Waste Papers Ltd have been sentenced after health and safety breaches resulted in the death of one of their employees.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how a RRS London Waste Papers Ltd worker was found dead inside the compaction chamber of a baling machine. The worker had suffered fatal crush injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, which occurred on 27 March 2017, found the worker had fallen down the loading hopper into the compaction chamber of a baling machine. He was most likely attempting to clear a blockage and falling into the chamber initiated the compaction sequence.

The investigation found that this could have been prevented had RRS London Waste Papers Ltd devised and instructed workers on a safe method for clearing machine blockages. Climbing up the baler to clear machine blockages exposed workers to the risk of falling a significant distance either into the compaction chamber or the surrounding concrete floor.

RRS London Waste Papers Ltd of Manor Road, Erith was found guilty of breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £250,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,639.77 and a victim surcharge of £170.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Nicholas Wright said: "This tragic incident, which led to the avoidable death of a father, was easily preventable and the risk should have been identified.

"Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery. Maintenance work should only be carried out when the piece of equipment is isolated and confirmed safe. Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.