

Engineering company fined after workers contract dermatitis

An engineering company has been fined for failing to control the risk of its employees developing dermatitis following exposure to metalworking fluid.

West Hampshire Magistrates' Court heard that, between October 2017 and January 2019, employees of Lymington Precision Engineers Co Limited were exposed to metalworking fluid while working on conventional machines such as lathes and milling machines on the company site in Limington, New Forest. Metalworking fluid is used on the machines to lubricate and cool work pieces and is classed as a substance hazardous to health. Exposure to metalworking fluid can lead to the development of dermatitis and asthma and can have serious, life-changing health effects.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to ensure adequate measures were in place for the control of exposure to metalworking fluids, exposing their employees to the risk of contracting dermatitis.

Lymington Precision Engineers Co. Limited of High Street, Rickmansworth have pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 7(1) of The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and have been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,447.46.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Nicola Pinckney said: "This case could so easily have been avoided by simply implementing correct control measures and appropriate working practices. Appropriate controls could include provision and use of well-fitting overalls, use of gloves in contact with contaminated work pieces, avoidance of the use of airlines for cleaning activities, and the provision of an effective skin care regime.

"Control of exposure to hazardous substances is a legal requirement on employers and HSE provides guidance on how control can be achieved."

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>
4. HSE guidance and information about Dermatitis can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/employ/dermatitis.htm>

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