

Food manufacturing giant fined £594,000 after two workers scalded at Melton Mowbray site

- Samworth Brothers Ltd, which owns Ginsters, Soreen and West Cornwall Pasty Co. brands, handed six-figure fine over failings.
- An employee and a contractor suffered scald injuries after being splashed with hot water while carrying out maintenance of steam pipework at the manufacturer's Kettleby Foods factory in Melton Mowbray.
- HSE investigation found the company failed to assess risks of the maintenance task and that isolation and lock-off procedures were not followed.

A major food manufacturing company has been fined £594,000 following an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), after an employee and their colleague suffered scald injuries when they were carrying out maintenance work on steam pipework in the company's factory in Melton Mowbray.

The two men were working at the Kettleby Foods factory, operated by Samworth Brothers Ltd, which owns popular food brands including Ginsters, West Cornwall Pasty Co. and Soreen, when they were scalded by hot water from the pipework.

The men were working to replace a leaking gasket in an isolation valve on steam pipework in the boiler room of the factory. They were undertaking the work from a gantry above the boiler. The gantry didn't provide access to the specific part of the pipework they were working on, and so both men had to step off the gantry and work on top of the boiler. When they removed the gasket, they were both splashed with hot water from the pipework, suffering scald injuries. One of the men suffered 4-5% subdermal burns, and the other suffered 9% subdermal, second-degree burns.

The investigation by HSE found that Samworth Brothers Limited had failed to risk assess the task and failed to document a safe system of work for the work being undertaken. The investigation found that suitable isolation and lock-off procedures were not used at the time of the incident, and that the work was undertaken at height without sufficient measures in place to prevent a fall from height. There was a lack of adequate supervision and monitoring procedures in place to ensure that expected processes were followed.

HSE guidance states that adequate planning of tasks requiring isolation means there should be preparation and coordination of job documentation such as risk assessments, method statements, permits and isolation certificates. The integrity of isolations should be proved before proceeding with intrusive work. When working at height, employers should make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people, including using the right type of equipment for working at height.

HSE Inspector Stacey Gamwell said:

"A company this size should have known better.

"This was a wholly avoidable incident which could have resulted in even more serious consequences.

"If Samworth Brothers Ltd had properly risk-assessed the task, they would have identified the need for proper controls for working at height, as well as robust isolation and lock-off procedures, including supervision and monitoring to make sure those procedures and controls were properly enforced.

"Their failure led to severe and painful scalding injuries which should never have happened.

"The result handed down should serve as a warning to employers; when it comes to keeping people safe, HSE won't hesitate to take action against firms which fall short."

Samworth Brothers Limited, of Chetwode House, 1 Samworth Way, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £594,000 and ordered to pay £5,834 in prosecution costs, in full, and a £2,000 victim surcharge, at Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 4 September 2026. The company was also ordered to pay £6,000 in compensation to the injured employee. All sums are to be paid by 4 January 2027.

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Andrew Siddall and paralegal officer Thomas Smith.

Further information:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
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. Relevant guidance can be found here: [The safe isolation of plant and equipment – HSE](#)
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#).