

Plastic manufacturing company fined after death of young dad

A company that manufactures plastic products for the food industry has been fined £330,000 after a young dad was killed while doing his job.

Nathan Hook, a father of one, was working for Suffolk-based Maynard and Harris Plastics, when he was drawn into rotating machinery. As a result, the 34-year-old suffered fatal head injuries. The incident happened at the company's premises in Ellough, near Beccles, on 7 October 2021.



Nathan Hook was killed while doing his job

Speaking after the hearing, his mother Jacqueline Castledine said the investigation and prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had 'completely exonerated' her son.

"I have very mixed emotions but pleased Nathan's been completely exonerated," she said.

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank those have supported us throughout this horrendous ordeal, far too many to mention. But mostly the HSE for their thorough investigation and its conclusions.

"We must now try to move forward keeping Nathan with us always."

The HSE investigation found that Nathan had been on a late shift and was operating a lathe in the tool room to create a work piece for a machine. He applied emery cloth by hand to the workpiece to debur the metal. Emery cloth is similar to sandpaper and can be used to polish metal workpieces. However, it became entangled and wrapped around the workpiece, drawing him in. His sweatshirt sleeve also became entangled pinning him against the rotating workpiece and causing fatal head injuries.

The investigation found that Maynard and Harris Plastics had failed to provide suitable health and safety training regarding the use of emery cloth on lathes. The company did not have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for use of alternative methods, such as application of emery cloth using a stick.

Maynard and Harris Plastics, of Ellough, Beccles, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. They were fined £330,000 and ordered to pay £4,373 costs at a hearing at Chelmsford Magistrates Court on 5 December 2024.

HSE inspector Natalie Prince said: "Our thoughts remain with Nathan's family.

He was a young dad who should have returned home safely to them at the end of his working day, but because of this company's failings, he did not."

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyers Nathan Cook and Jon Mack and supported by paralegal officer Imogen Isaac.

Notes to editors:

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. 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 in England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).
5. HSE guidance on the [use of emery cloth on metalworking lathes](#) is available.