

Plastics firm fined after two workers lose fingers in just ten days

- Both incidents happened during ten-day period in August 2024.
- Two workers lost fingers in different pieces of machinery.
- One of them, a grandmother, had worked at the firm for 28 years.

A company in Leeds that produces plastic products has been fined after two of its workers lost fingers in machinery in separate incidents over the course of just ten days.

Commercial Lines Limited, trading as HLN Supplies, pleaded guilty to charges brought by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) following the two unrelated incidents in August 2024 – both caused by unsafe machinery.

The HSE investigation found the company hadn't put adequate guards on machinery, meaning dangerous parts were easily accessible. The first incident happened on 12 August, when Angela Morrison, a then 61-year-old grandmother, was attempting to clear a blockage on a sanding machine. The plastics fabricator reached into a ventilation port, and her hand came in contact with a large metal rotating disk, resulting in severe damage to the fingers on her right hand.

Mrs Morrison, who has eight grandchildren, and had worked for the company for 28 years, described how she was initially in shock and could not feel any pain, but was operated on within an hour of being rushed into hospital. Doctors needed to remove what was left of her middle finger, with another finger being seriously damaged – so much so, it will also now need to be amputated.



Angela Morrison sustained serious injuries in the incident

"They are also going to remove a portion of what is left of my middle finger to make it look better," she explained.

"I am naturally right-handed so everything is now much more difficult. You don't notice it until you go and do something and then you realise you can't. Little things like opening the oven or getting out change in my purse.

"My grandchildren were a bit afraid and squeamish of my injuries at first but they soon got used to it. There are things I can't do for them that I would like to, such as doing my granddaughter's hair.

"When I think about the accident, I just keep thinking 'if only it didn't happen' or if I'd done something differently. I just want to turn the clock back.

"I have been off work since, but my long-term hope is to get back to work, even if it's an office job."



The sanding machine being used by Angela Morrison

Despite the wholly avoidable incident – it was only ten days later on 22 August, that another worker sustained serious injuries when his left hand came into contact with the blade of a table saw he was using to cut small strips of plastic. The 57-year-old lost part of the finger above the knuckle on his index finger and required surgery to remove the top of his middle finger several days later.

The HSE investigation found the company had failed to provide adequate guarding on the sanding machine, allowing dangerous parts to be easily accessible. Additionally, table saw training had been insufficient, and no safe work systems were in place when cutting small materials. The company also failed to have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place for the work being carried out.

Every year, there are a number of accidents from using work equipment, including machinery. Many are serious and some are fatal. HSE offers detailed guidance on work equipment and machinery – [Work equipment and machinery – HSE](#).

Commercial Lines Limited (T/A HLN Supplies), of Upper Accommodation Road,

Leeds, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and section 3(1) The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – They were fined £16,000 plus £6,534 in costs at Leeds Magistrates Court on 26 March 2026.

HSE Inspector Gavin Carruthers said:

“For this company to have not one but two completely avoidable incidents in such a short time shows systemic health and safety failings.

“Both workers have been left with injuries that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. The fact one of those hurt was a much-love grandmother who had worked at the company for nearly three decades makes these failings all the more stark.

“If proper guarding, training, and safe systems of work had been in place than these two workers would not have sustained such life-changing injuries.

“HSE will take action when companies fail in their duties to keep workers safe.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE Enforcement Lawyer Arfaq Nabi and paralegal officer Zara Salman

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 – [Woodworking – 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](#).