

University fined after research workers exposed to risk of suffering adverse health effects

The University of Edinburgh has been fined for its failings which led to animal research workers, who were already sensitised to laboratory animal allergens (LAA), being at risk of suffering from adverse health effects as a result of exposure to LAA.

Edinburgh Sheriff Court heard how the researchers both began work at the University of Edinburgh in 2003. Both declared that they were already allergic to rodents around the time of taking up these positions. Over the years both continued to work with rats and were exposed to various levels of LAA, a respiratory sensitiser and a substance hazardous to health.



An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that The University of Edinburgh failed to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments of the exposure to LAA, particularly when it was known that the research workers were already sensitised to LAA. They failed to ensure suitable health surveillance was carried out at regular intervals (not more than 12 months apart) and that sufficient information, instruction, supervision and training was provided to the research workers.

The University of Edinburgh of Chambers Street, Edinburgh pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2 and Section 33 (1) (a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974 and was fined £10,000.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Susan Donnelly said: "This was a case of the University completely failing to grasp the importance of risk-based health surveillance.

"If the University had implemented a system of risk-based health surveillance, it would have ensured that an Occupational Health Management system was in place which would monitor worker's fitness for work. Such systems can prevent an employee's health condition becoming severe and life altering."

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>

The post [University fined after research workers exposed to risk of suffering adverse health effects](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

Farm equipment manufacturer fined after employee's arm pulled into lathe

A company has been fined after a worker was injured when his arm was pulled into a metalworking lathe.

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard how in January 2018, an employee was using emery cloth to hand-polish a workpiece, as it was being rotated on a Colchester Mascot 1600 manual lathe at the site in Woodbridge, Suffolk. The employee was wearing gloves when he got caught on the rotating chuck, causing his arm to be pulled into the machine. As a result, his arm became fractured

in four places.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) revealed that employees were not provided with the necessary training, information or instructions to carry out this work in a safe manner. There was no risk assessment, nor company policy on the dangers of using emery cloth or wearing gloves while operating a lathe. Furthermore, the lathe was in operation without an emergency stop fitted to the machine.

Richard Western Limited of Woodbridge, Suffolk, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company has been fined £50,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,717.19.

After the hearing HSE inspector Eleanor Kinman said: "This injury was easily preventable, and the risk should have been identified by the company. It was common practice to polish workpieces in the way the employee was doing, and to wear gloves whilst operating the lathes.

"Operatives and companies should be aware that emery cloth should never be applied directly by hand on a lathe, and that the wearing of gloves increases the risk of entanglement and is never acceptable near rotating parts of machinery. "Employers must properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk whilst operating machinery."

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3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. Guidance on how to do it safely can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/eis2.pdf>

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Haulage company fined after worker injured by moving vehicle

A haulage company has been fined following an incident where a warehouse operative was injured at its business premises at Snetterton, Norfolk.

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard that on 22 March 2018, whilst working in Foulger Transport Limited's hub warehouse, Martin Shepherd was struck by a moving forklift truck and knocked to the ground. Before the vehicle came to a stop Mr Shepherd's foot became trapped under the wheel, breaking bones in the upper part of the foot.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Foulger Transport Limited, a part of the Kinaxia Logistics group of companies had failed to have in place appropriate systems to ensure that vehicles and pedestrians moved around the warehouse in a safe manner. Recent changes to the warehouse layout had not been considered in the company's assessment of risk and the warehouse team were relied upon to work safely with each other without effective training and supervision

Foulger Transport Limited, of The Circuit, Snetterton, Norfolk pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1), by virtue of regulation 17(1), of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,724.05.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Saffron Turnell said:

"This incident could easily have been avoided had appropriate systems been put in place to suitably separate the fork lift trucks and pedestrians.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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Two people sentenced after failing to control the risk of Legionella bacteria

Two people have been sentenced after failing to control the risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria in the cooling tower at their business premises in Spring Hill, Birmingham.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard that, between June 2017 and February 2018, Kulwant Singh Chatha and partner Satpaul Kaur Chatha of Isher Hangers failed to put suitable measures in place to control the risk of Legionella bacteria from the cooling tower on their premises. Concerns raised by their own water treatment consultants were ignored, and no Legionella risk assessments were in place.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the cooling tower was not being managed to control the risk from Legionella bacteria. This failure exposed employees of Isher Hangers, as well as members of the public, to Legionellosis – a collective term for diseases caused by the bacteria including Legionnaires' disease, which can be fatal. People who have underlying or current medical issues are especially susceptible to infection, which was a particular concern as Isher Hangers' premises are in the vicinity of two major hospitals.

Kulwant Singh Chatha and Satpaul Kaur Chatha pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were each sentenced to serve 12 weeks in prison, suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay costs of £12,115 each, including a victim surcharge of £115.

Speaking after the case, HSE inspector Karen Sweeney said, 'Isher Hangers were operating a cooling tower without biocide, ignoring the advice of their own consultants. Cooling towers have the potential to spread bacteria that can cause serious illness or death, if not maintained in accordance with the published guidelines.'

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Forging company fined after worker loses fingers and thumb

A forging firm has been fined after a worker had to have fingers and a thumb amputated following an incident while he was operating a press at its Stourbridge site.

Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court heard that on 25 June 2018 a forger at Brooks Forgings Limited had his left hand crushed between dies and moving parts on a press. Following hospital treatment his thumb, index finger and part of his middle finger had to be amputated.





An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to ensure that effective measures were taken to prevent access to the dangerous parts, namely gripping dies and heading tool of the Samuel Platt Upset Forging Press.

Brooks Forgings Limited of Doulton Road, Cradley Heath, West Midlands pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company has been fined £1,500 and ordered to pay costs of £2,511.11.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Karen Sweeney said. “The installation of simple guarding mechanisms and a system of ensuring a safe system of work was in place would have prevented the forger from losing significant parts of his hand.

“Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to eliminate or minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery”.

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