

Worker suffers flash burns

A manufacturing firm has been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker suffered flash burns to her face, neck, chest and both arms.

Pyronix Limited manufactures intruder alarm equipment. Part of the manufacturing process involves dipping Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs) in Fluorocoat Thin Film Coating, which is a highly flammable substance, to provide humidity protection.

Sheffield Magistrates' Court heard that in April 2015 the injured worker was dipping baskets containing a variety of the PCBs which had batteries pre-installed prior to dipping. As the worker removed a basket out of the tank, she saw a "burning cloud" go through the tank and was unable to avoid being burnt after the Fluorocoat had been ignited.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that changes needed to be made in the planning of this activity. A number of modifications were made to the tank and process. This included not installing the battery into the PCB until after dipping, adding local exhaust ventilation to the tank and additional measures to control static. Employees also received additional training.

Pyronix Limited of Hellaby Rotherham pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and was fined £140,000 with £3133.25 costs

After the hearing, HSE inspector Laura Hunter commented: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

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

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. 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>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.