

Yogurt manufacturer fined after two employees suffered serious injuries

A yogurt manufacturing company has been prosecuted after two employees suffered serious injuries following the release of an acidic cleaning solution.

Telford Magistrates' Court heard that, on 1 January 2016, one of the employees of T M Telford Dairy Ltd suffered serious burns from contact with 1% nitric acid cleaning solution that had a temperature of 65°C, when working on a faulty valve on a CIP (cleaning in place) system on the company site in Donnington Wood, Telford. The valve blew off under pressure and the hot acidic cleaning fluid surged out, hitting the roof overhead and spraying on to the employees. Whilst trying to escape from the acidic cleaning fluid, one of the engineers fell from a hooped ladder and sustained a head injury.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to ensure the safety of its employees and that it had not formally trained the two engineers in lock-off and isolation procedures, use of permits to work and safe removal of valves. There was no assessment of the risks in place for the safe removal of valves.

T M Telford Dairy Ltd of Donnington Wood, Telford pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,379.45.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Keeley Eves said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to assess the risks and implement safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in a safe system of working.

"If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the injuries sustained by the employees could have been prevented".

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>

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