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Worker injured by 300kg batteries

A recycling company in West Yorkshire has been fined £120,000 after batteries weighing at least 300kg fell onto an employee and severely injured him.

The man was working with two colleagues when he was struck by the batteries being recycled.

The three workers had been restacking the batteries that were stored in Flexible Intermediate Bulk Containers (FIBCs) after it had toppled over.

However, the FIBCs started to rip in front of them leading to the batteries falling on to one of the workers. He suffered a double compound fracture to his lower right leg, a fracture to the left tibia, a fractured right collar bone, some bruising to his ribs and a cut on his forehead.

A HSE investigation found the recycling company had failed to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its employees at work. The site was overstocked, bags of batteries had been stacked in an unsafe manner and there was no specific documented risk assessments or safe systems of work for the correct stacking and storage of batteries. This was not an isolated incident.

HSE guidance says FIBCs must not be stacked unless the FIBC is designed to be stacked and only then should it be stacked in either a pyramid form or against two walls. Learn more about HSE guidance here: [Waste Management: Frequently Asked Questions \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/waste/management/frequently-asked-questions.htm)

The Company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £4,937.39 in costs.

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Your alliance for compliance

Engineering company fined after worker loses 2 fingers

An engineering firm in Perth has been fined £10,000 after an employee lost two of his fingers.

The worker had been carrying out maintenance work on a grain dryer.

He inadvertently placed his hand into the blades of an unguarded rotary fan in the grain dryer. The fan was rotating at 1200 revolutions per minute when it came into contact with the worker's hand.

This led to his little and ring fingers being amputated. He was off work for seven weeks following the incident.

An HSE investigation into this incident found his employer had failed to risk assess the task that the employees were required to undertake. On the day of this incident, there was no risk assessment for the work to be done nor was there any safe working procedure.

It's important that clear information is given to workers when using machinery. Steps must be taken to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery. HSE guidance can be found at: [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 \(PUWER\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/puwr/).

The Company pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 22 of The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and was fined £10,000.

Two employees suffer serious injuries

A bedding manufacturer has been fined more than £250,000 after two of its employees were seriously injured during separate incidents at its site in Rochdale.

The HSE prosecuted the bedding manufacturer following the incidents, which saw both workers undergo amputations.

The first incident involved a 32-year-old employee. On his first day working on the line, he was instructed to clean the measuring wheel on a cutting machine. He climbed onto the conveyer belt, however the cutting machine had not been properly isolated from all sources of power and the machine's clamp came down, trapping the employee's left hand and causing the circular saw to move.

The saw was brought to a stop by another employee who pressed the emergency stop button.

Unfortunately, this was not in time and resulted in the worker having three fingers amputated from his left hand.

A second employee was also involved in an incident while operating a quilting machine. The 51-year-old had noticed a fallen casing and attempted to place it onto the back of the machine while it was being operated. However, his gloves became tangled in the machine, causing his right hand to be dragged in. This caused lacerations and crush injuries to his right hand and resulted in the tips of two of his fingers to be amputated.

HSE inspectors Leanne Ratcliffe and Elena Pickford investigated the incidents and found the company did not guard the machinery and did not implement suitable and sufficient procedures to isolate machinery from power.

The Company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 11 of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and was fined £251,250 and ordered to pay £6,862.63 in costs.