



## Safety Bulletin 95

### HSE demands firms take safety seriously after teenager injured

The Health and Safety Executive has warned of the importance of using safe working procedures when cleaning printing machinery.

The warning follows the prosecution of East Lancashire Box Company of Spring Mill, Spring Street, Rishton, Lancashire after a 16-year old employee's hand was dragged into a printing machine while he was cleaning it.

The HSE has also reminded companies of their legal responsibilities associated with employing young people and the need for proper supervision to prevent them carrying out tasks without receiving proper training.

The company pleaded guilty at Hyndburn Magistrates Court to three charges under health and safety legislation, it was fined a total of £12,000 and ordered to pay £3,451 costs.

East Lancashire Box Company was charged with failing to ensure the health, safety and welfare of an employee under Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. Failing to make a suitable risk assessment under Regulation 3 (1)(a) Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and also an offence under the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 1920 in that they employed a child in an industrial undertaking.

HSE inspector Matthew Lea told the court that the charges related to an incident on the 28 March 2008 when the 16-year-old was cleaning a slow-moving roller using a cloth wrapped around his hand.

The cloth became entangled in the top roller, dragging his hand into the machine, breaking a finger and causing crush injuries to two of his fingers. The company had no risk assessments or safe operating procedures for any of their machines and the procedure used to clean the printer roller posed a risk to their employees' safety.

The 16 year old was employed as a factory worker with the specific task of folding and breaking out cardboard boxes. However, if he completed these tasks the teenager was told to help with tidying up.

Matthew Lea said:

*"This accident highlights the dangers associated with cleaning and maintaining printing machines. It is vital that companies develop a safe system of work for these operations.*

*"Companies should also consider the additional responsibilities associated with employing young people, and ensure that they are properly supervised to prevent them attempting tasks which they have not been trained to do - even if they are just trying to make a good impression by keeping busy.*

*"This accident was avoidable and sadly despite several operations, this young man is still unable to straighten his hand. He has also been unable to follow his chosen career path which was to join the armed forces."*



## Notes

1. Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at work etc Act 1974 says: "It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees."
2. Regulation 3 (1)(a) Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 says "Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work."
3. Section 1 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 1920 says: "No child shall be employed in any industrial undertaking."

**If you require any further information, clarification or assistance with the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us;**

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**Source – Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**  
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