

CASE STUDY: FIRM FINED FOR MULTIPLE FAILINGS AT WASTE SITE



A waste and recycling site in Carmarthen was in such a dangerous condition that visiting health and safety inspectors had to issue eight notices to immediately halt a range of work activities, a court has heard.

The site was subject to a routine inspection by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors on 20 May 2013 when a number of serious safety issues were discovered, including access to unguarded dangerous machinery, exposure to risk of electrocution and areas contaminated by asbestos containing materials.

The court was told the site had a catalogue of dangerous points.

Among these was a “man basket” on a forklift truck to allow workers to carry out work at height. This basket was not secured to the forks of the truck and there was no cage behind the basket to stop workers becoming trapped with the fork lift truck mast.

There were no suitable guards to prevent workers getting caught in the moving machine parts of a granulator, two compactors, a shredder and a paint mixing drum, and electrical cables were found trailing through liquid, leading to a risk of electrocution.

In addition, exposed and damaged pipe lagging, which included asbestos containing materials, was in a poor state and exposed workers at the site to the risk of contamination. This was allowed to continue by the firm despite an earlier report by a specialist that had identified the presence of asbestos in the area and recommended its urgent removal.

The company pleaded guilty to a breach of health and safety regulations, a single breach of control of asbestos regulations and a breach of work equipment regulations and was fined a total of £35,000 and ordered to pay £20,000 in costs.