

CASE STUDY: COMPANY FINED FOR SAFETY FAILINGS LEADING TO RISK OF LEGIONELLA



A steel coating company has been fined for failing to manage the risks from legionella bacteria at two cooling towers over a period of five years.

Newport Crown Court heard how in February 2014, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited the business and found it had been operating two cooling towers on site without taking appropriate measures to control the risk of proliferation of the bacteria since 2009.

The risks from the operation of the cooling towers had not been assessed, there was no written scheme, the towers were in poor condition, drift eliminators to reduce the spread of aerosol were missing, there was no water treatment programme in place and staff had not been trained to appreciate and manage the risks.

Prohibition Notices were immediately served by the HSE inspector that prevented the cooling towers being used until all appropriate controls were put in place. Improvement Notices were then served with regard to risk assessment and management.

The company was fined a total of £75,000 and ordered to pay £28,393 in costs after pleading guilty to offences under Section 2(1) (£30,00) and 3(1) (£45,000) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.