

## **£13,000 fine after worker crushed clearing baler jam without deactivating power**

**A recycling centre in Manchester has been fined after a worker's hand was seriously crushed in an unsafe baler.**

The Wrapp Recycling employee had worked at the company's site in Bolton for just eight weeks when the accident happened on 2 October 2018, Manchester and Salford Magistrates' Court was told.

He was trying to remove a piece of plastic that had blocked the hopper while the machine was switched on. He removed the guard and leaned into the machine to clear the blockage, which activated the ram.

He sustained serious crush injuries to his hand and lost two fingers, for which he is still undergoing treatment.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found Wrapp Recycling had chosen to install a removable guard on the baler because it often became jammed during normal operation. In addition, employees did not know about the dangers of accessing the hopper while the power was on and, as a result, it was common practice for them to clear blockages by hand with the machine still running.

The HSE also found a risk assessment had not been carried out, which would have identified the necessary control measures needed, such as a fixed guard and a safe lock-off.

Wrapp Recycling pleaded guilty to breaching s 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. It was fined £13,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,952.

After the hearing HSE inspector Catherine Lyon said: *"This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and implementing a safe system of work."*

