

Company's \$380,000 Lesson

27 October

WorkSafe says businesses must learn from their health and safety mistakes and ensure changes are effective and address the risks in the workplace.

The warning comes after The Tasman Tanning Company was sentenced today in the Wanganui District Court just five years after they were fined for similar health and safety breaches. The sentencing follows an incident in April 2016 where a forklift driver was exposed to hydrogen sulphide gas, a well-known hazard in the tanning industry. The worker was shifting containers when he was overcome by the gas. The worker lost consciousness twice, resulting in a concussion, facial gashes and a nose injury.

The Tasman Tanning Company has a prior conviction for failing to ensure its employees' safety at its other Wanganui plant after exposure to hydrogen sulphide gas left four workers unconscious in 2012.

WorkSafe's investigation into the 2016 incident found multiple failings by the company. These failings included a lack of training and warnings, failure to provide personal gas monitors, ineffective communication between workers at shift changes and failure to have policies in place to adhere to safe operating procedures.

The Tasman Tanning Company Ltd was fined \$380,000 and ordered to pay reparations to the victim of \$18,000.

Notes:

- The Tasman Tanning Company Ltd was charged under sections 36, 48(1) and (2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
 - Being a PCBU, failed to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers who worked for the PCBU while they were at work in the business or undertaking, namely working on or near the mixing floor, and that failure exposed them to a risk of death or serious injury/illness, arising from exposure to hydrogen sulphide gas.
- The maximum penalty under sections 36, 48(1) and (2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 is a fine not exceeding \$1.5 million.