



SUBJECT: BATH SCALDING DEATH

RECIPIENTS: All Residential Homes

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Elderly woman died after suffering burns in nursing home bath

A nursing home in Deeside has been fined for breaching safety laws after an 88 year-old resident suffered nine percent burns to her body when she was lowered into a bath of scalding hot water.

The resident died of complications caused by her injuries a month after the incident.

Mold Magistrates Court heard that Miss Morgan, who was unable to walk, was lowered into the bath using a hoist and immediately cried out when she touched the water. Although she was quickly raised from the bath, she suffered nine per cent burns and was taken to Whiston Burns Unit where she later died.

HSE's investigations found that the temperature of the hot water was not properly controlled to prevent it exceeding 44 degrees Celsius. Although mixing valves had been fitted to control the temperature, they had not been maintained and were not of the right standard required in nursing homes.

Although staff had been instructed to check water temperature with a thermometer before baths, no checks were made by management to ensure this was happening. There had been a failure by the company to fully assess risks involving use of hot water and to provide sufficient training, instruction and supervision to staff.

Safety regulations require a Type 3 thermostatic mixing valve to be fitted to hot taps when bathing vulnerable people and these should be regularly maintained.

HSE prosecuted the home's owner, Greencroft Care Ltd, who pleaded guilty to a breach of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £5,000. The judge at the hearing said if the firm had not been in liquidation, he would have sent the case to crown court, where the fine would have been at least £100,000.

