

Legal Helpline 0800 0857 857

Rotten workplace gives member occupational asthma

A 62-YEAR-OLD UNISON member developed asthma after being exposed to fungal spores at his place of work.

David Livingstone from Cumbria was working as a substance misuse specialist for Addiction Dependency Solutions, a local charity specialising in drug and alcohol services at a 400-year-old building in Kendal, when he became ill.

The member had noticed mould developing on the building's exterior wall close to his desk and, despite making his concerns known to his employers, the fungus was neither investigated nor removed.

Within two months, David developed an aggressive cough and a wheezy chest. His symptoms worsened and he had to take a month off work.

Upon his return to work the mould was still present and his health again began to deteriorate. His employer eventually instructed builders to investigate the problem and it was finally fixed after an extensive renovation.

David was officially diagnosed with occupational asthma and was prescribed ongoing medication to control his condition.

Six years on, he still needs to take two asthma inhalers every day. David contacted UNISON at the time his symptoms started to develop.

His union then instructed Thompsons Solicitors to investigate their member's claim for compensation and £12,000 was secured for the health problems that his employer's lack of action caused.

Compensation for school cleaner after trial

A UNISON MEMBER was injured when she slipped on water while carrying out her work as a primary school cleaner.

She advised her union who instructed Thompsons to investigate the case for compensation.

Although there was no dispute that there had been water on the floor, the defendant, Manchester City Council, alleged that the cleaner had been responsible for the spillage in the first place. She denied this and maintained that the school caretaker was at fault.

Because liability remained in dispute and an agreement could not be negotiated, the case was taken to Manchester County Court where both the cleaner and the caretaker gave evidence.

While the judge found our member to be a credible witness, the caretaker significantly changed his evidence in the witness box and sought to embellish important information and was therefore not thought credible.

The judge found in favour of the member and approved compensation of £5,800.

THOMPSONS REGIONAL SERIOUS INJURY TEAM

If you or a family member suffers a serious injury, life is likely to become difficult

Cases involving serious or 'catastrophic injury' often lead to multi-million pound settlements and can take many years to conclude, so a relationship that you trust really matters.

Thompsons Regional Serious Injury Team can provide specialist advice and representation, and immediate help with what you need.

We will also work closely with UNISON to ensure a link is maintained with employers and work colleagues while you or your family member have medical treatment.

In addition to our expert legal advice we can also offer and advise on:

- Hospital visits
- Needs assessments
- Financial support/welfare benefits
- Practical and emotional support
- Family visits at home or in hospital
- Rehabilitation support
- Advice on health and social care services
- Capacity and decision making

For more information please contact: Imogen Wetton, Thompsons Manchester, 0161 819 3540, imogenwetton@thompsons.law.co.uk

Compensation secured after serious fall at work

A UNISON MEMBER from Cheshire suffered a fractured ankle and several torn tendons and ligaments after falling while following the instructions of his supervisor at work.

The member was helping to move office furniture into a newly-built office on the site of the Manchester Airport Shuttle Car Park. While doing so, he noticed a customer drive in to the car park and went to greet them, as was his job.

Tripped on metal strip

As he left the office building, the member tripped over a raised metal strip.

He fell through the doorway and landed awkwardly on uneven ground.

He was attended to by paramedics before being taken by ambulance to Wythenshawe Hospital where he received treatment in its fracture clinic.

The member made contact with

UNISON who instructed Thompsons to investigate a claim against his employer.

Due to the employer's failure to carry out an effective risk assessment of the site, ensure that traffic routes were free from obstruction and put in place any signs warning employees of hazards, over £67,000 was secured in compensation.

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Back injury caused by trip at work

A UNISON member working for Oldham Borough Council was injured after she tripped and fell over loose telephone wires at work.

The fall resulted in the member suffering soft tissue damage to her back as well as the aggravation of her pre-existing chronic pain syndrome.

After being contacted by her union, Thompsons Solicitors secured £25,000 in compensation.

This highlights the importance of employers making sure that trip hazards are kept to a minimum by properly securing any loose wires and cables.

About Thompsons

Thompsons Solicitors is the largest national specialist personal injury practice in the country with over 1000 staff in a network of offices nationwide.

We secure over £150 million compensation each year for people who have been injured and suffered loss as a result of accidents caused by the carelessness of others. Thompsons only works for injured people, never for insurance companies or employers.

Please email newsletters@thompsons.law.co.uk to let us know if this newsletter was helpful and what topics you would like covered in future.

 **THOMPSONS**
SOLICITORS

STANDING UP FOR YOU

CONTACT DETAILS

Legal Helpline
0800 0857 857

Textphone
(for the hard of hearing)

0800 0967 968

Mon-Fri

6am-midnight

Sat 9am-4pm

Did you know?

As a UNISON Member you receive: Free legal advice and representation on:

- Personal Injury at work (including assaults)
- Personal injury away from work
- Road traffic accident injury
- Holiday injury
- Slips and trips
- Industrial disease or illness
- Employment law accessed through your UNISON branch.

For UNISON Members and their families we offer free legal advice and representation on:

- Personal injury away from work
- Road traffic accident injury
- Holiday injury
- Slips and trips away from work
- Industrial disease or illness incurred away from work
- Special terms for clinical negligence cases
- Reduced rates for conveyancing and family member wills.