Factory fined after staff hurt in chocolate accident

A factory which makes M&Ms and Mars bars has been fined more than $14,500 (£12,000) after an accident in which two workers fell into a vat of chocolate.

The US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) cited Mars Wrigley in the June 2022 accident at the Pennsylvania M&M/Mars factory, saying the workers were not authorised to work in the tanks and were not trained on the proper safety procedures for the equipment.

Officials said the two workers, who were employed by an outside contracting firm, fell into the partially filled chocolate tank while doing maintenance work at the site in Elizabethtown.

Emergency responders were able to free the pair by cutting a hole in the bottom of the tank, officials said.

Both were taken to hospital, one by helicopter.

A company representative told reporters last week that the safety of workers and outside contractors “is a top priority for our business”.

“As always, we appreciate OSHA’s collaborative approach to working with us to conduct the after-action review,” the representative said.

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Mars Wrigley manufactures chocolate, chewing gum, mints and other sweets.

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The two companies merged in 2008 when Mars gained full control over Wrigley after acquiring the remaining shares owned by billionaire Warren Buffett.