

Construction company and plastering firm fined after employee falls from height

Two companies have been fined after a worker sustained serious injuries by falling approximately three metres through a hole cut into a floor during the refurbishment of a property at in Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard how on 27 July 2017, an employee was working as a dry liner for R&B Plastering Limited, who were contracted on the site to Robert Norman Construction Limited, the Principal Contractor (PC).

The employee was working on the second floor of the property, near to a hole that had been cut into the floor to facilitate plaster board being passed up from the level below. The employee fell approximately three metres through the hole, causing him to sustain fractures to his vertebrae and ribs, and severe bruising.

He required hospitalisation for nineteen days and had to wear a back brace for six months. He also suffers ongoing physical and psychological issues as a result of the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the hole was not adequately protected via covering or access. R&B Plastering Limited had put a risk assessment in place for the work, but it was not adequate, and was not provided to the PC prior to work commencing.

The PC's own policy outlined the need to review any sub-contractors' risk assessments prior to them starting work; and by failing to follow this policy the PC missed any opportunity to review R&B Plastering's risk assessment.

Robert Norman Construction Limited of Framlingham, Suffolk were found guilty in their absence to breaching Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and have been fined £140,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,426.

R&B Plastering Limited of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and have been fined £26,700 and ordered to pay costs of £8,426.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Prentiss Clarke-Jones said: "The employee's injuries are life-changing and he could have easily been killed. The incident could have been avoided if both companies had fully implemented safe systems of work and identified, during the planning stages, that materials would need to be safely transported between floors.

"Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related injuries in this country, and the controls needed to prevent the associated risks are well known. Dutyholders should follow the guidance on planning

works to ensure that risks such as this work at height can be eliminated in the first instance by allowing safe means of access.”

Notes to editors

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. hse.gov.uk

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

4. Further guidance can be found:

Managing Health and Safety in Construction: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l153.htm>

Working at Height – A Brief Guide: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf>

Preventing injuries during plasterboard handling: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis76.pdf>

Preventing falls down internal voids:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/assets/downloads/voids.pdf>

The post [Construction company and plastering firm fined after employee falls from height](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Kitchen fitter sentenced after illegally carrying out gas work](#)

An unregistered self-employed kitchen fitter has been sentenced after carrying out illegal gas work.

Exeter Crown Court heard how Brian Squibb, trading as BKS Kitchens and Bathrooms, was contracted to fit kitchens and signed an installer agreement giving the name of a Gas Safe member as the engineer he would use for gas work. However, in the summer of 2019, Brian Squibb carried out gas work at two properties in Exeter himself, falsely using another person’s name and registration number.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Squibb has never had any competencies in gas work or been a member of the Gas Safe Register. However, he had removed an existing natural gas hob and capped off a live gas supply failing to check for gas tightness.

On completion of this work Mr Squibb produced documentation for the homeowners falsely using a registered gas engineer’s name and Gas Safe Register details in an attempt to hide his unregistered gas work

Brian Squibb of Elizabeth Avenue, Exeter, Devon pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1), 3(3) and 3(7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. He was sentenced to eight months in prison, suspended for 24 months and ordered to undertake 120 hours unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay costs of £4,250.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Simon Jones said: “Brian Squibb undertook gas work, which he knew he was not registered to do. He then tried to cover up his unregistered and incompetent gas work by producing fraudulent documentation.

“All gas work must be done by registered Gas Safe engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life”

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[Sawmill company fined after worker fatally injured by machinery](#)

A sawmill company has been fined after a worker was fatally injured when a lift conveyor collapsed on top of him.

Hereford Crown Court heard how on 20 December 2017, two employees were working below a lift conveyor at Pontrilas sawmill in Hereford to remove wood debris. The machine had been experiencing a fault, which had prevented the conveyor from descending. While the employees were working the conveyor suddenly dropped downwards causing fatal crush injuries to one employee and bruising and abrasion injuries to the head of the other employee.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), found that the company had failed to assess the risks to the employees during the cleaning operation or provide a suitable system of work for removing debris from beneath the raised lift conveyor.

Pontrilas Sawmills Limited of Hereford Road, Pontrilas, Hereford pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £22,016.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Lee Schilling said: “Unplanned maintenance activities give rise to the risk of fatal incidents.

“Simply securing the lift conveyor in a raised position to prevent the inadvertent downward movement or collapse would have prevented this incident.”

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The post [Sawmill company fined after worker fatally injured by machinery](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Company fined after worker’s hand caught in metalworking lathe](#)

An engineering company has been fined after a worker’s hand was caught in a metalworking lathe resulting in serious injuries to his hand and arm.

Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard how on 24 January 2019, an employee of Martland Rollers Limited, had been using emery cloth by hand to smooth down a part which was turning in a lathe at the company’s site in Cricket Street, Wigan. A glove he was wearing became drawn into the moving parts and his arm followed, causing breaks, lacerations and nerve damage.

An investigation by the Health and Safety executive (HSE) found that the employee had been undertaking a trial period at the company with a view to permanent employment. Martland Rollers Limited failed to carry out a suitable risk assessment and did not provide adequate training or supervision to prevent the new employee engaging in such a dangerous work activity.

Martland Rollers Limited of Botanic Road, Southport, Merseyside pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act

1974. The company was fined £13,300 and ordered to pay costs of £3,284.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Roger Clarke said: "This injury was entirely preventable if the risk had been identified and suitable control measures put in place.

"Adequate training and supervision should also have been in place to ensure the machine was being used safely by newer operatives."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. More information about use of emery cloths on metalworking lathes can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/engineering/lathes.htm>

The post [Company fined after worker's hand caught in metalworking lathe](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[HSE spot checks and inspections are taking place in the Telford area](#)

HSE is working with Telford & Wrekin Council to carry out spot checks and inspections on businesses in Telford to check they have COVID-secure measures in place.

To protect workers, visitors and customers, employers must make sure that business have put measures in place, and everyone is following them to manage the risks from coronavirus.

HSE will be calling and visiting businesses from all different sectors in the area to check they are following the government guidelines for a period of three weeks starting on February 1st.

Councillor Richard Overton, Telford & Wrekin Council's cabinet member for enforcement, said: "We will be talking to local businesses and visiting and inspecting sites in Stafford Park, Hortonwood and Halesfield to understand how they are managing risks in line with their specific business activity.

“Becoming COVID-secure needs to be the priority for all businesses. It is a legal duty for businesses to protect their workers and others from harm and this includes taking reasonable steps to control the risk and protect people from coronavirus.

“This means making business adjustments to become COVID-secure. We advise employers to work with their employees when implementing changes, to help increase confidence with workers, customers and the local community.”

Being COVID-secure means businesses need to keep up to date with the latest guidance and put measures in place to manage the risk and protect workers, visitors and customers.

During the calls and visits, HSE provides advice and guidance to manage risk and protect workers and visitors, but where businesses are not managing this, immediate action will be taken.

Angela Storey, Director of Transformation and Operational Services at HSE said: “Across the country we are working with local authorities, like Telford and Wrekin Council, to check businesses are COVID-secure and providing support and advice where needed.

“Our spot checks and inspections support the cross-government work in helping employers and employees at work during the pandemic.

“All workplaces are in scope for spot checks which means businesses of any size, in any sector can receive an unannounced check from HSE or an inspection from the local authority, to check they are COVID-secure.

“If you are contacted by the HSE or your local authority, please engage with us.

“By making sure that businesses have measures in place to manage the risks, we can benefit the health of local communities as well as support the local and national UK economy.”

Please ensure your workplace is safe by following the guidance on [being COVID-secure](#). Further information on [spot checks and inspections](#) is available on our website.

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2. HSE news releases are available at <https://press.hse.gov.uk>

3. For HSE's working safely guidance

see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

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