

Company fined after subcontractor falls from height

Solar panel company Blue Sun Energy Limited was sentenced today for safety breaches after a self-employed labourer fell through a rooflight.

Leeds Magistrates' Court heard that on 13 December 2018, the 34-year-old, was working on behalf of and under the control of Blue Sun Energy Ltd when he fell approximately 3.5 metres through an unmarked and unguarded fragile surface (rooflight) into the shed below.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the worker was undertaking snagging work relating to the installation of solar panels on the roof of a cowshed at Home Farm Gargrave, Skipton. He stepped onto one of the roof lights and fell through it. He suffered a traumatic brain injury, fractured shoulder and severe bruising. He has yet to return to work.

Blue Sun Energy Limited of Avenue Road, Queniborough, Leicester pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £38,019 and ordered to pay £1,071 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ben Caines said: "Falls from height often result in life-changing or fatal injuries. In most cases, these incidents are needless and could be prevented by properly planning the work to ensure that effective preventative and protective measures are in place such as edge protection or coverings built to the correct standard.

"This incident could have easily been prevented if the company had installed adequate edge protection or covered the opening to prevent falls."

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 through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.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>

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