

Construction firm fined after worker fell from height

Construction company Kier Construction Limited has been fined £400,000 after a worker fell from height.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how Jair Morales was installing plywood boards covering holes on the third floor of a building at a construction site in Uxbridge, Middlesex when he fell a distance of 3.95m to the floor below.

The court heard no steps had been taken to prevent him falling through the opening as he installed the plywood boards. Mr Morales suffered fractures in his pelvis and his arm following the fall and has been unable to work since the accident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Kier failed to ensure the work was properly planned and carried out in a safe manner.

Kier Construction Limited of Tempsford Hall, Bedfordshire pleaded guilty to breaching section 4 (1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, has been fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,534.

Speaking after the case HSE inspector Owen Rowley said: "This incident could have been a lot worse. The system that Kier Construction Ltd has in place to control the risk from installing the protection for openings was not implemented on site, ultimately resulting in the accident.

"The risks of working at height are widely recognised throughout the construction industry. This case highlights the importance of ensuring that all work at height is properly planned and carried out safely."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce 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. 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>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.