

# Specialist lifting company fined after two workers fell from a crane

A specialist heavy lifting company has been fined after two men fell from height during the assembly of a crane.

On 19 January 2021, two employees of Osprey Heavy Lift Limited fell as a result of a partial collapse of a platform on a crane at the Port of Blyth, Northumberland.

The platform was being installed using four lifting chains, each had a hook and safety clasp. The hooks were looped over metal lugs on the platform in order to lift it into position. The workers removed the two lifting chains nearest the crane structure and moved along the platform to attach the other side to the crane pendants.

At this point, the two remaining lifting chains came off the lugs and one side of the platform fell to the ground.

Despite both men using safety equipment, they both fell from the platform. One operative fell about four metres to the ground below causing serious injuries, including fractures to ribs, right wrist, and eye socket.



The collapsed platform

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Osprey

Heavy Lift Limited failed to properly plan the lift and therefore unsuitable lifting accessories were used. Suitable anchor points for operatives using fall arrest equipment were not identified and there was no consideration of fall distances. Additionally, they failed to provide appropriate instructions and information for work at height and lifting operations.

HSE has guidance on [working at height](#) and [lifting operations](#).

At South Tyneside Magistrates' Court on November 7, Osprey Heavy Lift Ltd of Portishead, Bristol, Somerset pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay costs of £9,136.

After the hearing, HSE inspector, Clare Maltby said: "Companies who undertake crane assembly work must properly plan lifting activities and work at height, making certain the equipment selected is suitable for the task.

"All organisations undertaking lifting and work at height must ensure work is properly planned, and the correct equipment is selected. Workers should be provided with adequate health and safety information and instructions."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE lawyer Samantha Wells.

#### **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.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.

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## **[Rogue plumber handed suspended prison sentence](#)**

A man from St Helens has been given a suspended prison sentence for carrying out illegal gas work in Cheshire.

Richard Goldthorpe, 37, installed various gas appliances at an address in Sandbach in April and May 2022 despite not being registered with the Gas Safe Register.

The homeowner contacted the police after noticing Mr Goldthorpe had not carried out the work properly. They were then made aware of Mr Goldthorpe's

previous chequered history.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had previously served Goldthorpe with a Prohibition Notice (in 2014), banning him from carrying out gas work. However, in 2020, he was prosecuted for carrying out more illegal gas work and given a 16-month prison sentence as a result.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Gas – HSE](#).

Goldthorpe has also been exposed for his illegal gas work on BBC's Rogue Traders TV programme.

An investigation by HSE found that Mr Goldthorpe carried out the installation of gas appliances despite not being Gas Safe Registered.

Richard Goldthorpe, of St Georges Road, St Helens, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(3) and Regulations 3(7) of the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) 1998 act and to breaching a HSE Prohibition Notice. He was sentenced to a total of 32 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and was ordered to pay £1,000 costs at Chester Magistrates on 6 November 2023.

HSE inspector Rose Leese-Weller said: "Richard Goldthorpe brazenly undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do.

"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. Such offenders will be prosecuted.

"Goldthorpe has been previously prosecuted for the same offences and had even been warned on national television that he was breaking the law. The work he did was unsafe, it is only a matter of chance that no one was seriously harmed.

"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. The public should always ask to see the gas engineer's identification and check the registration number online ([www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)) or ring the Gas Safe Register customer helpline 0800 408 5500."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE senior enforcement lawyer Nathan Cook and enforcement lawyer Gemma Zakrzewski.

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  4. Guidance on [gas safety](#) is available.
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## [Demolition company given £60,000 fine as worker seriously injured](#)

A Woolwich labourer is 'lucky to be alive' after part of a Victorian building fell on him during demolition work in Kilburn, North West London.

MAC Demolition Ltd, the Middlesex firm contracted to carry out the works, has been fined £60,000 after Tommy Brooks was left with life changing injuries. The 57-year-old had been employed on the site as a labourer for three months before the incident.

The company had been contracted to carry out soft stripping works on the Victorian property as well as the demolition of its roof.



Tommy Brooks was carrying out demolition work on this Victorian property in Kilburn.

Guidance on [safe demolition](#) is available.

On the morning of 2 March 2022, Mr Brooks had been tasked with clearing bricks for reclamation. He was working at the corner of the building when a large piece of masonry fell from the unstable roof, landing on top of him.

He was left with significant long term injuries including a broken shoulder and 12 broken ribs, as well as spinal and internal injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found MAC Demolition had failed to adequately assess the risk of falling objects during demolition and failed to implement and enforce adequate exclusion zones.

MAC Demolition Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 20 of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. They were fined £60,000 and ordered to pay £3,229 costs at a hearing at Willesden Magistrates Court on 2 November 2023.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Gordon Nixon said: “Tommy’s injuries were life changing and he is lucky to be alive.

“This serious incident and the devastation it caused could have been avoided if basic, industry standard control measures had been put in place.

“Companies need be aware that we will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.”

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## **[October 2023 – A roundup of HSE’s top stories](#)**

Here are some of the stories published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in October, with the workplace regulator heralding a key milestone in building safety, announcing a new inspection campaign, securing justice and urging employers to try the shout test!

### **HSE to prosecute Falcon Tower Crane Services Limited following deaths of three men**

We started off the month by [announcing our prosecution against Falcon Tower Crane Services Limited](#) after a crane collapsed in Crewe and killed three men.

A trial at Chester Crown Court will take place in relation to the incident, which occurred in June 2017, starting on 4 November 2024.

Read more here: [HSE to prosecute Falcon Tower Crane Services Limited following deaths of three men | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Companies fined as child suffers fractured skull**

[Three companies were fined last week](#) after a slate tile fractured the skull of a three-year-old girl.

The pre-schooler was placed in an induced coma and required a two-hour operation to remove fragments of slate from her head following the incident.



Moonfleet Manor hotel

Read more here: [Companies fined as child suffers fractured skull | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **HSE to visit farms as part of national inspection campaign**

[Inspectors from HSE will visit farms](#) across England, Scotland and Wales in the coming months as part of a push to change the culture in the farming industry and check for compliance with long standing legal requirements.

The inspectors will also look at risks to members of the public, which often means the management of cattle around public rights of way, as well as child safety on the farm.

Read more here: [HSE to visit farms as part of national inspection campaign | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **BSR register of high-rise buildings represents major momentum for building**

## **safety**

[The Building Safety Regulator's new regulatory regime has moved further ahead](#) in its vital registration programme of in-scope high-rise residential buildings, that are at least 18 metres or seven storeys tall, with two or more residential units.

Principal Accountable Persons (PAP's) were given until the 1 October 2023 to register all high-rise residential buildings in England. It is now an offence to allow residents to occupy an unregistered building.

Read more here: [BSR register of high-rise buildings represents major momentum for building safety | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Company fined £240,000 after Liverpool residents put at risk during removal of dangerous cladding**

[A HSE prosecution was brought against Green Facades Limited](#) after the company failed to take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of residents living in a Liverpool apartment block.

When a HSE inspector visited the apartment block, they found cladding, similar to that used on Grenfell Tower, lying on residents' balconies.



Combustible material exposed where scaffold is attached to the building

Read more here: [Company fined £240,000 after Liverpool residents put at risk during removal of dangerous cladding | HSE Media Centre](#)

### **Try the shout test – protect workers’ hearing**

With around a fifth of the British working population potentially exposed to high noise levels, HSE is now urging workplaces to consider the shout test to manage noise at work and ways to give workers’ ears a break.

Bosses must assess and identify measures to eliminate or reduce risks from exposure to noise so that they can protect the hearing of their workers.

Read more here: [Try the shout test – protect workers’ hearing | HSE Media Centre](#)



## Construction company fined after serious injury to 16-year-old on work experience

[A teenage boy suffered serious injuries](#) after becoming trapped under a tractor while on paid work experience at Earlcoate Construction and Plant Hire Limited.

The teenager's dad says his son is now more anxious as a result of the incident.



Read more here: [Construction Company fined after serious injury to 16-year-old on work experience | HSE Media Centre](#)

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

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## [Suspended prison sentence for builder over gas safety failures](#)

A builder has avoided an immediate spell behind bars after being convicted of carrying out gas work at a property in Berkshire when he was not qualified to do so.

Thomas Murray, who traded as Kerbgold Design and Construction Ltd, was given an eight-month prison sentence which was suspended for 18 months.

Reading Crown Court heard how Murray had been contracted to manage a large-scale renovation and extension of a property in Maidenhead in July 2018. The project involved significant gas work, including the installation of a gas boiler, relocation of a gas meter and the installation of associated pipework for both.

Further information and guidance on [domestic gas health and safety](#) is available.

However, the project over ran and the householders had to return to the property in January 2019, where they soon reported the smell of gas. Murray carried out a test which detected no gas leak.

As their concerns persisted, the homeowners contacted a Gas Safe Registered engineer to inspect the installation. The engineer found a gas leak and other faults within the installation. In addition, Cadent Gas, the gas supplier to the property, had never been notified about the relocation of the meter and pipework. The pipework leading to the meter was found to have been laid to incorrect depth and fittings suitable only for water pipework had been found to have been used throughout the installation.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that although Murray arranged for a Gas Safe engineer to install the boiler, they had only connected the water plumbing and left the property due to concerns being raised. In a bid to allow the homeowners to access hot water and heating, Murray decided to undertake some of the gas work himself as a temporary fix.

Murray, of Heath End Road, Flackwell Heath, Buckinghamshire, pleaded guilty to breaching section 3(2) of the Health Safety at Work Act 1974 and was sentenced to eight months in prison, suspended for 18 months. He was also

ordered to complete 250 hours unpaid work.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Karen Morris said: “In this case, Mr Murray was responsible for overseeing the gas work, which was not finished and had left householders and their neighbours at risk from the dangers and effects of leaking gas.

“To make matters worse, he decided to try and finish the job himself, despite not being competent to do so.

“His failures could have led to catastrophic and tragic consequences.

“We will not hesitate to prosecute builders who fail to ensure that gas work under their control is conducted safely using Gas Safe Registered engineers.”

Gas engineers and consumers can contact the Gas Safe Register in any of these ways:

- [Gas Safe Register](#)
- Phone – **Consumers:** 0800 408 5500; **Engineers:** 0800 408 5577
- Email – [enquiries@gassaferegister.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@gassaferegister.co.uk)

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