

# Manufacturing company fined after worker fatally crushed

A manufacturing company has been fined £120,000 after a worker was killed after becoming trapped between two heavy steel beams.

In May 2019, Steve Rooke, 55, was working in the workshop at Mifflin Construction Ltd in Leominster, Herefordshire. The company manufacture and install steel components for the construction industry.

Steve, who had worked at the company for more than 27 years was using an overhead travelling crane to lift the middle of three beams to position it better on a trolley or 'bogey' which ran on rails in the workshop. The beam he was lifting was 18m long and weighed 1,800Kg. As it was lifted, it rotated in a sling, toppling sideways and trapping him against another beam causing fatal injuries.

Karen Rooke, Steve's wife said: "Steve's death has left a big hole in our lives. How can you move on when something like this has happened?"

"It's changed everything, every plan we had has gone and our future is cancelled.

"He was good at his job, hard-working and conscientious and I still struggle to understand how and why this happened.

"I've lost a husband and the girls have lost a loving dad and he'll have missed out on so many things to look forward to like becoming a grandparent."

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had failed to ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment was conducted by a competent person to identify well known industry standard control measures. Suitable and sufficient information, instruction, and training was not provided to employees about lifting operations at the site. The company did not properly plan lifts and did not have a system for ensuring that there were adequately qualified supervisors present during lifting operations.

Businesses or organisations that undertake lifting operations or are involved in providing lifting equipment for others to use, must manage and control the risks to avoid any injury or damage. HSE has guidance on [lifting operations](#).

At Kidderminster Magistrates' Court on 4 March, Mifflin Construction Limited of Worcester Road, Leominster, Herefordshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £120,000 and ordered to pay costs of £50,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Steve Richardson said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

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

**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.