

Roofing company and director prosecuted after skylight fall

A roofing and building company, and its director, have been sentenced after an employee fell through a skylight.

North East Derbyshire & Dales Magistrates' Court heard that on 26 March 2018, an employee was carrying out replacement work on the fragile roof of a stable block when he fell through a skylight at Owler Lee Farm, Dronfield. He had stepped from newly fitted metal sheets onto a Youngman board on the skylights. The lower end of the board went through the skylight and he fell around 15 feet to the floor below, resulting in fractures to his knee, elbow and wrist.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Ian Wilkinson, the director of Weathervane Roofing & Building Limited, did not adequately plan the work at height, which meant there was no safe system of work in place for removal and replacement of the fragile roof of the stable building. As a result, there were inadequate measures in place for preventing falls through the fragile roof, or from one of the roof edges, and there was nothing in place to catch the operatives and prevent them from hitting the ground in the event of a fall.

Weathervane Roofing & Building Limited of Vicarage Close, Holmesfield pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation, 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,125.70.

Mr Ian Wilkinson of Vicarage Close, Holmesfield pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was sentenced to a 12-month community order with 160 hours of unpaid work. He was ordered to pay costs of £1,125.40.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Laura Royales said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known. Whilst the injuries sustained by the operative in this case were serious, it is only by chance that they were not fatal. Those in control of work at height must ensure that the work is properly planned and that suitable measures are implemented for preventing falls, or for mitigating the effects of a fall."

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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