

# Self-employed gas engineer sentenced for unsafe gas work

A self-employed gas engineer, trading as Shabba Gas Services Plumbing and Heating Engineer, has been fined for carrying out unsafe gas work after installing a boiler which had multiple installation faults.

Isleworth Crown Court heard how, in November 2016, Dexter Regis installed a boiler at a private address in Newbury Park, London. The boiler malfunctioned posing a risk to the occupants of the property by exposing them to carbon monoxide.

The faults came to light when the family living at the property became unwell. Mr Regis was called back to fix the boiler, but the problems continued. The family then engaged another gas engineer to inspect the boiler who found that it was immediately dangerous and posed a risk.

An investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found that the flue had been assembled with parts from more than one manufacturer, there was water leaking from the joints and it had been propped up with rubble.

Dexter Regis of Lady Margaret Road, Southall Court, Middlesex pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 5(3), 26(1), 26(5) and 27(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, suspended for two years with requirements to undertake 200 hours of unpaid work and a tagged curfew between 9pm-6am for 3 months. No order was made for prosecution costs because Mr Regis has no means to pay.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Charles Linfoot said: "This case involving a badly installed gas boiler and flue could have had tragic consequences. It highlights the importance of engineers working to the correct standards and installing gas boilers in compliance with manufacturer's recommendations, using the correct flue which is properly supported.

"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. [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk)
2. For more information on safe gas installation please see HSE

guidance:<https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/gas.htm>

3. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
4. Further HSE news releases are available at [hse.gov.uk/press](https://www.hse.gov.uk/press)

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## [Company fined after a worker injured by a forklift truck](#)

A cardboard manufacturer has been sentenced after a visiting lorry driver suffered life changing injuries when he was struck by a forklift truck (FLT).

Peterlee Magistrates' Court heard that on 27 August 2019, the driver was assisting in the loading of pallets of cardboard tubes onto his vehicle at a delivery yard in Stanley, County Durham. In the course of loading the second pallet, the FLT being used to lift the pallets reversed and struck the driver, causing crush injuries to his right leg.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found that Corespec Limited failed to organise the delivery yard at the premises in such a way that pedestrians and vehicles could work in a safe manner. This was because of a lack of suitable segregation between pedestrians and vehicles.

Corespec Limited of Greencroft Industrial Park Stanley, County Durham, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 17(1) of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. The company was fined £117,585 and ordered to pay £5,404 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ashfaq Ali said: "This injury was easily preventable. Planning for transport safety and implementing safe working practices should avoid such incidents. Workplace transport is a significant hazard, and the risks must be recognised and managed. There are simple and effective measures employers can take to help keep everyone safe.

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

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg136.htm>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## [Company fined after worker falls and suffers serious injuries](#)

A housing company has been sentenced after an agency worker suffered serious injuries in a ladder fall.

Teesside Magistrates' Court heard that on 8 November 2017, the worker was carrying out work at height from a ladder, removing beading to an external first floor window on a residential home. The worker fell a distance of three metres, suffering serious injuries including four fractured vertebrae.

A Health and Safety Executive investigation found that the housing company had failed to properly plan, supervise and carry out external work at height.

Thirteen Housing Group of Northshore Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 (1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,327.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ashfaq Ali said: "This incident could have been prevented had the company properly planned the work at height. This would have included the use of reasonably practicable measures such as mobile tower scaffolds, which were introduced for similar work following the incident."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

4. Further information about safely working at height can be found at:  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/height.htm>

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## [Contractor prosecuted due to partial collapse of building](#)



A building contractor was prosecuted after carrying out unsafe excavation works, which resulted in the partial collapse of a residential building.

Manchester Crown Court heard how on 14 August 2019, Iproject Cheshire Limited had been carrying out refurbishment works on a building in Old Lansdowne Road, Didsbury, Manchester. Employees of the company undermined the foundations while digging out the ground around the building causing a partial collapse. There were no injuries or fatalities, but the collapse presented a risk to life.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to properly plan or carry out the work safely. A risk assessment into the excavations had not been carried out. There was no safe system of work in place and the work had not been sufficiently supervised.

Iproject Cheshire Limited of Park Lane, Poynton, Stockport pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £31,500 and ordered to pay costs of £13,500.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector David Argument said: "This was a very serious incident, and it is fortunate that nobody was injured as a result of it.

"This incident could have been prevented if the company had carried out a

suitable and sufficient risk assessment prior to commencing work on the excavations and by properly supervising the work.”

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. More information about working safely during excavations can be found at [https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safety\\_topics/excavations.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safety_topics/excavations.htm)
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## **Demolition work must be properly planned and managed to prevent serious injury**

Great Britain’s workplace regulator is asking demolition and construction firms to double-down on thorough planning, management and control of demolition and refurbishment work.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is asking that businesses properly plan, organise, manage, and monitor their work and use competent people to avoid incidents and ill health amongst their workers and the public.

It is reminding companies that the safer they are, the more efficient they are. Good health and safety management increases the likelihood of contracts coming in on time and within budget with fewer added costs, and often to a higher quality.

In the past year HSE has dealt with prosecutions involving severe injuries and fatalities as a result of poorly planned demolition work. This has included:

- A contractor who suffered serious injuries when a single-story roof he was demolishing by hand, collapsed at a construction site in Cobham, Surrey.
- A 64-year-old man who was killed when a garage wall at a garden in Hampshire collapsed on him during demolition, after a contractor who was operating a digger failed to put an exclusion zone in place whilst carrying out the work.
- A 21-year-old employee who was killed whilst dismantling a redundant grain drying tunnel at a farm in Kent when a farming partnership failed to ensure

the integrity of the structure during the dismantling process.

- An employee who sustained injuries to his shoulder, and a fractured heel and ankle when he was hit by falling debris from a garage wall in Clitheroe that was being demolished in an unsafe manner.
- A contractor who was prosecuted for disturbing asbestos and damaging underground cables during demolition works at a site in Blackburn, causing severe disruption to services.
- The operator of a cherry picker who sustained life-changing injuries when he became trapped during a demolition operation at a site in Greater Manchester. A HSE investigation found the vehicle he was operating was not suitable for the task and had not been fitted with proprietary devices to avoid the likelihood of operators being crushed.

HSE is reminding contractors that it is crucial to complete a survey ahead of demolition work including structural investigation and appraisal, which considers the age of the structure, type of construction, history of the building including alterations and design codes used to avoid an uncontrolled collapse. Specific consideration should also be given to the effect of additional weight of demolition machinery and debris on suspended floors; and the risks to nearby buildings and structures.

HSE's head of construction Sarah Jardine said: "Structural instability can be a problem in buildings that are old, decayed, poorly maintained, and in newer buildings that have been badly designed and constructed or abused in use.

"Even sound structures can become unstable because of a lack of planning of construction and demolition work."

She added: "It is easy to get it wrong even on small, straightforward structures, which makes it even more important to put the planning in place when it comes to demolishing large, complex structures. Demolishing these types of structures is a particularly hazardous activity and doing it safely is highly complicated and technical, so relevant expertise is vital. These jobs require careful planning and execution by contractors who are competent in the full range of demolition techniques and have access to designers and engineers with the right knowledge, skills, and experience in this area."

A systematic approach to demolition projects should be a team effort. Clients must appoint professionals who have the relevant skills, knowledge, experience, organisational capability, and who are adequately resourced.

Clients, with the help of the principal designer must provide essential pre-construction information to the relevant designers and engineers. This should include a range of surveys and reports to check for presence of asbestos, structural stability, and the location of above and below ground live services.

It is the principal designer's responsibility to plan, manage, monitor, and coordinate health and safety issues in the pre-construction phase to ensure principal contractors are provided with relevant information to enable them to put safety measures in place. Once the demolition work has begun it is the principal contractor's responsibility to plan, manage and monitor the

demolition activities and coordinate work to ensure that it is carried out without risks to health and safety. While site managers must ensure workers are supervised and are following safe working practice.

Sarah Jardine added: "Incidents caused by poor planning and risk management can have substantial human costs that are felt for many years by the victims and their families.

"In addition to the impact on people's lives, incidents can also lead to substantial remediation costs, higher insurance premiums, and, if HSE investigates, court fines and prison sentences, which will inevitably impact reputations.

"As well as being morally right, it is simply common sense and good business to ensure rigorous planning, organising, managing and monitoring of the whole project."

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2. More about the regulations referred to in this release can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/demolition.htm>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>