

# Two construction companies fined after working platform failed

Two construction companies have been sentenced following an incident where a working platform failed and a bricklayer using the platform was injured.

Durham Crown Court heard how, on 1 July 2019, Dere Street Homes Limited were acting as principal contractor and provided components for a proprietary polypropylene working platform at a new build at Marley Fields, Wheatley Hill, County Durham. SGS Construction & Design Limited were acting as a contractor and supplied workers to erect the working platform. The working platform failed and a worker was injured.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that a number of components were missing from the working platform. Although previously workers supplied by SGS were formally trained in the erection of the components to form a safe working platform, the worker who erected the failed platform had not received adequate training. The signing off as a safe working platform had earlier been undertaken by a site manager working for Dere Street Homes. When this manager left, a number of months prior to the incident, the inspection and signing off of the working platform was no longer undertaken.

Dere Street Homes Limited of The Farm House, Hedley Hill Farm, Cornsay Colliery, County Durham pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations and was fined £38,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,367.30.

SGS Construction & Design Limited of Laburnum Avenue, Blackhill, Consett, County Durham pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 15(2) of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations and was fined £8,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,683.60.

After the hearing, HSE principal inspector Rob Hirst commented: "Although the worker did not suffer life changing injuries, there was a potential for more serious injury.

"Those in control of work have a responsibility to ensure that workers are adequately trained, properly supervised, and work activities are appropriately monitored."

## **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](https://www.hse.gov.uk)

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. For more information on scaffold safety go to: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffoldinginfo.htm>

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