

Construction company fined after carpenter injured in fall from height

A Hitchin-based construction company has been sentenced after a carpenter sustained nerve and tissue damage to his lower back after a fall from height.

Luton Magistrates' Court heard on 2 May 2017, the employee was working for and under the control of MP Building Limited. He climbed up to remove a nail from a brace holding trusses, one of which started to fall causing the employee to fall with it. Raised safety decking used as fall mitigation within the building did not cover the whole area and left significant gaps.

The 36-year-old carpenter sustained nerve and tissue damage to his lower back, whiplash to neck and his little finger was ripped open.

An investigation by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the risk assessments of MP Building Limited were generic. They identified falls from height, but control measures focused on scaffolding and did not mention internal falls and decking. It was also found that operatives on the site were not trained to install the safety decking.

MP Building Limited of Bilton Road, Hitchin pleaded guilty to contravening Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Regulation 13(1) of Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company has been fined £65,000 and ordered to pay £6,298.82 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Jenny Morris said: 'This incident could so easily have been avoided by planning work at height to ensure that suitable and sufficient measures were in place to prevent falls.'

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

Further guidance to doing it the right way can be found at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/key-messages.htm>

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We seek to 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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