

Construction company fined for breaching work at height regulations

A construction company has been fined after HSE inspectors found unsafe working at height practises and other unsafe site operations during a routine inspection.

Kidderminster Magistrates' Court heard that on 8 October 2019, a routine inspection was undertaken at a construction site in Redditch, Worcestershire following a report of a fall from height. During the inspection there was evidence of poor management of work at height, and numerous other uncontrolled site safety risks. This included unsafe work on a flat roof where there was no edge protection as required by the regulations to prevent a fall from height, despite there having been a fall from the same flat roof eight days earlier.

Prohibition Notices were served immediately in response to the work at height breach and for unsafe access and egress into the building. An Improvement Notice was served in relation to planning for work at height and a Notification of Contravention was also served for other identified failings.

SSF Construction Limited of The Old Foundry, Ash Street, Bilston, West Midlands pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. They were fined £48,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,443.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Chris Gregory said: "The company had not learnt the lesson from the recent fall from height and failed to ensure that appropriate fall prevention or mitigation measures had been put in place, so there was the potential for further falls from height and serious injuries or fatalities. Other significant risks identified during the inspection confirmed a widespread failure to manage and monitor the site to protect workers and others from foreseeable risks.

"Those in control of work have a responsibility to ensure that work activities are appropriately planned, managed and monitored, and that suitable control measures are both identified and implemented.

"HSE will not hesitate to take proactive enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards – it is clear that in this case we were left with no choice but issue these notices and prosecute."

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>
4. Further information for planning for construction work at height is available here: Construction – Assessing all work at height – HSE

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