

Director of G&S Roofing Ltd sentenced following unsafe roofing work

The director of a roofing company has been handed a suspended jail sentence after an eagle-eyed Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector spotted unsafe work on a roof.

Brighton Magistrates' Court heard that on 11 August 2018, the inspector noticed three men working on the pitched roof of a two-storey house in East Grinstead, West Sussex, without any edge protection.



The HSE investigation found that the company's failure to ensure that work at height was carried out safely was attributable to Clifford Smith. The most basic of duties for those organising work at height is to provide adequate fall prevention measures. No fall prevention measures were provided by Clifford Smith whilst three roofers worked on the roof.

The court heard that this was not the first time the HSE had encountered poor working practices from G&S Roofing and Clifford Smith, with HSE having taken previous enforcement action and a prosecution in March 2018 for similar conditions at a site in Horsham, West Sussex.

Clifford Smith of The Hatchington, Worplesdon, Guildford pleaded guilty to a breach of section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work Act. He was sentenced to six months in jail, suspended for twelve months, ordered to do 200 hours of unpaid work and has been disqualified from being a director for three years. He was furthermore ordered to pay £4000 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Amanda Huff said: "We hope this case demonstrates that directors can be held personally liable for the failings of their company if they fail to manage health and safety. Clifford Smith had previous form for this and failed to learn the lessons; we hope others that cut corners will pay closer attention to the health, safety and wellbeing of

workers.”

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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