

Groundworks contractor fined for petrol fire

A Kent groundwork contractor has been fined after a worker sustained serious burns following petrol being thrown on a bonfire.

On 24 June 2020, a 26-year-old groundworker employed by Kent County Surfacing Ltd was working on a new residential development in Ramsgate, Kent when a co-worker used petrol on a bonfire. The groundworker was unaware of this and after he was instructed to light the bonfire, it engulfed him in flames as the petrol vapour ignited. The worker suffered serious burns and underwent two skin graft operations to his left hand, left arm, left side of torso and both his legs.

Groundworkers help prepare a construction site and ensure it is ready for the structural work to start.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to appropriately supervise their operatives and failed to provide them with the appropriate information and instruction, so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure work was carried out without risks to health or safety.

At Folkestone Magistrates on 10 October, Kent County Surfacing Ltd of 7 Mariners View, Deal, Kent, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 15 (8) of the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations. They were fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,333.42.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ross Carter said: "The operative's injuries are life changing and could have easily been fatal.

"This serious incident and devastation should have been avoided if those in control of the work provided the appropriate supervision, information and instructions to their 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. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Furniture retailer fined for insurance breach

A Bedford furniture retailer has been fined for not having the right insurance.

Exclusive Oriental Classics Ltd and its director Mr Kian Hoo Tay appeared at Luton Magistrates Court on 10 October for failing to have Employers' Liability (Compulsory) Insurance (ELCI).

The court heard an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) discovered the failure when one of the company's employees was injured at work on 1 March 2022.

Exclusive Oriental Classics Ltd and Mr Hoo Tay had failed to renew the insurance policy that expired on 13 May 2021.

Exclusive Oriental Classics Ltd, of Bellfield Avenue, Harrow, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 1(1) of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory) Insurance Act 1969, fined £1,650, a victim surcharge of £165 and ordered to pay costs of £1750.

The Director, Mr Kian Hoo Tay, of same address pleaded guilty to breaching Section 1(1) of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory) Insurance Act 1969, fined £1,650, a victim surcharge of £165 and ordered to pay costs of £1750.

After the hearing HSE inspector Emma Page said: "Every employer needs to ensure that they have Employers' Liability (Compulsory) Insurance in place to ensure against liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment.

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

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/) ; www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.htm
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Building firm fined after workers were put at risk during warehouse renovation, and for breaching Prohibition Notice

A building firm has been fined after putting workers working at height at risk during the refurbishment of a former warehouse building in London and for breaching a Prohibition Notice.

Shiva Ltd, a property investment company, were using a site-made cradle during the renovation of the five-story building on Bermondsey Street in the south-east of the capital.

Cradles are temporary suspended work access platforms widely used in the construction industry, which are commonly suspended from cables and raised and lowered into position by winches.

However, Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that on and before 26 February 2019, the company put operatives at risk of falling from height while unsafely refurbishing the front façade of the building.

Despite being served with a prohibition notice by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) the company continued the work the following day.

An investigation by the HSE found that workers were at significant risk of falling from height by manually lifting the cradle from the open edge of the roof and working from height near unprotected openings; and that the work was not appropriately supervised. The company also obstructed justice by refusing to allow the HSE inspector access to the site.

As such, Shiva Ltd failed to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of those carrying out the work.

On 10 October Shiva Ltd of Lincoln Tower, Westminster Bridge Road, London, pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and breaching the Prohibition Notice. They were fined £46,000 and ordered to pay costs of £24,688.10.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Sharon Boyd said: "Inspectors will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against dutyholders who fall below the required standards and put lives at risk.

"Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries. In 2021/22, falls from height accounted for 29 fatal injuries in the workplace."

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 3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
 4. Further guidance can be found at: [Working at height: A brief guide \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk/working-at-height/)
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[Contractor fined after unsafe work leaves food factory employee seriously injured](#)



Contractor Bedford Transmissions Limited has been fined after a man fell from height and was seriously injured at a food factory.

Bedford Transmissions Limited, trading as BT Lerson, had been contracted by Veetee Rice to move and replace machinery within their factory in Rochester.

On 17 August 2020, an employee of Veetee Rice, stood on an unsecured metal plate left in place by BT Lerson the evening before and fell a height of approximately 2.5metres.

The employee's spine and pelvis were damaged in several places which required a lengthy stay in hospital and meant that he was unable to return to work for several months.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that BT Lerson did not properly plan, appropriately supervise, or ensure that the work was carried out safely. BT Lerson failed to identify the fall from height risk and necessary controls in their planning and did not take account of Veetee Rice's employees who were working in the area.

In the lead up to the incident, BT Lerson worked over the top of the hole where the employee of Veetee Rice fell, with no suitable measures to prevent falls of their own workers. BT Lerson then left the factory site with 2 unsecured aluminium plates covering the 2.5 metre drop with only plastic barrier tape marking the area.

That night, the employee was cleaning the work area when he stood on the unsecured metal plates and fell through.

At Folkestone Magistrates' Court on October 10, Bedford Transmissions Limited pleaded guilty for a breach of Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. They were fined £8,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,194.32.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Peter Bruce said: "This incident could have easily been avoided if Bedford Transmissions had properly supervised and planned this work, to ensure that the work was carried out so far as is reasonably practicable safely.

"Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries. In 2021/22, falls from height accounted for 29 fatal injuries in the workplace.

"It is important that companies properly plan the work they are undertaking at height putting in place measures to protect their own employees as well as others who have access to their work area. It is also important that, when working at an external premise, employers work together and communicate how a site will be left and whether additional measures are needed."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/735/contents/made>
3. Guidance related to topics in this case can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg159.pdf>, <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l24.pdf> and <https://www.hse.gov.uk/p>

[ubns/indg401.pdf](#).

4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

World Mental Health Day: Supporting staff must be a priority for employers

- **Workplace regulator HSE offers free advice for employers to help protect mental health**
- **17 million working days are lost due to stress, anxiety, or depression every year in Great Britain**
- **Tackling this could bring economic benefits**
- **Reminder comes on World Mental Health Day (Monday October 10)**

Good mental health in the workplace must be a priority for employers.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) believes supporting staff wellbeing is not only the right thing for bosses to do but could also benefit Britain's economy.

The workplace regulator is reminding employers of the importance of mental health support on International Mental Health Day (Monday October 10).

HSE offers free advice for employers on supporting their staff's mental health through its Working Minds campaign, which is aimed at addressing the impact of work-related stress.

Around 17 million working days are lost due to stress, anxiety, or depression every year in Great Britain. Stress is thought to be responsible for almost half of working days lost. Research by HSE found of the people suffering from a work-related illness in Britain, 822,000 were reporting signs of work-related stress, depression, or anxiety.

Reducing this will not only help people lead happier lives but could also have significant economic benefits at a time when attention is focused on growing the economy.

HSE says a supportive working environment can improve productivity and performance, and workers are more likely to stay with an employer that prioritises good mental health. A report found evidence that UK bosses will receive an average return of £5 for every £1 spent on mental health.

Events are taking place today (Monday October 10) to mark International Mental Health Day; a global event organised by the World Health Organisation to protect and improve mental health across the world.

HSE's Working Minds campaign aims to help businesses recognise the signs of work-related stress and make tackling issues routine. The campaign was

launched after research showed mental health issues are the number one reason given for sick days in Great Britain.

Employers have a responsibility to assess and act on the risks in the workplace, not just in terms of physical safety but also mental health.

Sarah Albon, chief executive of HSE, said: "World Mental Health Day is a good opportunity for employers to check they have the right support in place for their staff when it comes to mental health. Taking action to improve workplace mental health not only benefits individuals, but also supports business growth and productivity. Employers should have an open environment where staff can share concerns and discuss options to ease pressures they face."

[A recent survey from Deloitte](#) suggests one in six workers experience a mental health problem at any one time and that the total annual cost of poor mental health to employers has increased by 25% since 2019, costing UK employers up to £56 billion a year. Deloitte's findings also suggest that UK bosses will receive an average return of £5 for every £1 spent on mental health.

Guidance on how businesses can spot the signs of work-related stress and prevent issues before they become a problem can be found through HSE's Working Minds campaign:

<https://workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/working-minds/>

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2. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
3. The Working Minds campaign is supported by Mind, Lifelines Scotland, NHS, ACAS, Mates in Mind, the Farm Safety Foundation, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Plastics and Composites Group, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association, the Federation of Small Businesses, CONIAC and the UK Home Care Association.
4. Information about World Mental Health Day can be found here: [World Mental Health Day 2022 \(who.int\)](#)