

Unregistered gas fitter fined for dangerous installation of range cooker at care home

A fitter has been fined following a gas leak from a newly fitted range installed in a North Devon residential care home.

Exeter Crown Court heard that on 24 December 2020, Mark Whitham undertook the installation of the new gas range cooker after damaging the existing gas cooker whilst fitting out a new kitchen. Over the next 24 hours staff at the care home experienced problems with the operation of the cooker and contacted their usual Gas Safe Registered engineer. He found a substantial gas leak from the gas supply connection to the cooker.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Whitham was not registered with the Gas Safe Register. The manufacturer's installation paperwork that came with the appliance when purchased, made numerous references to correct installation by a qualified engineer and numerous references to compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, however these instructions were not followed.

Mark Whitham of Fallow Fields, Barnstaple Devon, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and Regulation 22(1)(a) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment for each offence, suspended for 12 months. He was also ordered to undertake 120 hours unpaid work and to pay £2,000 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Simon Jones said: "Mark Whitham undertook gas work, which he knew he was not registered to do. In this case Mark Whitham's unregistered gas work put the lives of vulnerable people at real risk from fire and explosion.

"All gas work must be carried out by Gas Safe registered engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life."

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. 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>

The post [Unregistered gas fitter fined for dangerous installation of range cooker at care home](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Companies fined for inadequate guards on machinery](#)

Two sister companies based in Grantham, Lincolnshire that manufacture cardboard items, and a company that manufactures flat-bed die cutting (FBDC) machines have all been sentenced after a worker sustained serious injuries to his left hand.

Lincolnshire Magistrates' Court heard that Postpack Limited and Damasco UK Limited of Hollis Road Grantham, manufacture cardboard items including packaging materials, flat pack boxes and toys. They purchased five FBDC machines from DIG Corrugated Machinery Ltd of Cullen Place, Eastlands Industrial Estate, Leiston. A worker using one of the supplied machines caught his hand under the rotating main roller and the fingers and thumb of his left hand were crushed, leading to their amputation.

An investigation carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the machine was supplied with inadequate guards to prevent access to its dangerous parts. Following the incident and service of Improvement Notices the guards were extended.

Postpack Limited xxADDRESSxx and Damasco UK Limited xxADDRESSxx pleaded guilty to contravening Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 The companies were fined £4000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,152 with a victim surcharge of £340.

DIG Corrugated Machinery Limited xxADDRESSxx pleaded guilty to breaching the duty under Section 6(1)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 The company was fined £6500 and ordered to pay costs of £3529.20 with a victim surcharge of £170.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Mr Martin Giles commented:

“Those supplying machinery have a duty to ensure that it is safe. Purchasers and users of machinery must assess the equipment that they purchase and ensure that it is adequately guarded and that they have appropriate safe systems of work in place.

“If the flat-bed die cutter had been adequately guarded, then the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have easily been prevented.”

There is guidance to help companies assess the safety of machines on HSE's

website at www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/machinery/safety.htm

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[Construction company fined for repeated health and safety failings](#)

Construction company, Urban Living Constructions Limited, has been fined following a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspection which identified numerous health and safety failings.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard that an inspection of a construction site in Roseneath Road, London (SW11) on 5 August 2019 identified numerous health and safety breaches. These included locations on site that had no edge protection to prevent falls, including a plank that traversed a basement extension to provide access into the property.

There were also insufficient measures in place to prevent the collapse of the sides of a large excavation. HSE had previously inspected other Urban Living Constructions sites between

2015 and 2019. During this time two prohibition notices were served in relation to unsafe work at height and one prohibition notice was served in relation to an unsafe excavation.

Urban Living Constructions Limited of The Broadway, Woodford Green, Essex, pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The court fined Urban Living Constructions £50,000 and awarded full costs of £6,578.84.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Adam Thompson said: "The legal standards for ensuring work at height is carried out at safely and ensuring excavations on site are safe from the risk of collapse are well known throughout the construction industry. The standards on this site fell far below the minimum legal standard. This is inexcusable in any case, but even more so given the amount of enforcement action the company had previously received in relation to known health and safety risks."

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The post [Construction company fined for repeated health and safety failings](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Builder fined for unsafe practice](#)

A builder has been fined after a worker lost a finger whilst cutting timber.

Brighton Magistrates' Court heard that on 7 August 2019, two men were cutting timber joists for the flat roof of a domestic extension. A builder was carrying out the cutting using a circular saw, whilst the worker was holding the timber. During cutting, the saw slipped, amputating the worker's index finger, severely damaging his middle finger and slicing open his thumb along its length. It was not possible to re-attach the amputated finger and the middle finger still has no movement or feeling. It is not known what, if any, movement will return following further operations. As a result of the injuries, the worker has lost 70 per cent of the grip in that hand and is still suffering from post-traumatic stress.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found that the work had

not been properly planned and the risk of the saw blade coming into contact with the worker's hands had not been considered. The timber should have been secured to a workbench or similar so that no-one else was needed to assist whilst the saw was in use.

Benjamin Collier-Ware of Hailsham, East Sussex, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and was fined £1,969 with a victim surcharge of £181. He was also ordered to pay full costs of £3,940.20.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Stephen Green commented

"The worker's injuries are life changing. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices."

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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 about health and safety in food and drink manufacturing can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg252.pdf>

The post [Builder fined for unsafe practice](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).

[Company and director sentenced after children were taken ill during diving lesson](#)

A health and safety inspector has paid tribute to emergency responders who came to the aid of several children who were taken ill during a SCUBA diving training session.

Aqua Logistics Limited and their sole director Geoffrey Gordon Shearn were

today sentenced for their failings after twelve pupils from Manchester Grammar School breathed contaminated compressed air during a pool training session.

Wigan and Leigh Courthouse heard that on 26 June 2017, the school pupils became unwell during an on-site scuba diving course in the school swimming pool. Twelve pupils were taken to hospital with suspected carbon monoxide poisoning. One 14-year-old boy was put into an induced coma and another pupil was also in a serious condition.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) along with Greater Manchester Police, found the dive training staff had obtained refills to SCUBA cylinders supplied by Aqua Logistics Limited. Aqua Logistics Limited and the sole director Mr Shearn had not correctly installed and maintained the high-pressure compressor system. A fire in the filtration system resulted in contaminated air being supplied to YU Diving who were teaching the school children basic SCUBA diving skills.

Aqua Logistics Limited of Enterprise Centre Two, Chester Street, Stockport pleaded guilty to breaching section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £9,300 fine and ordered to pay £11,000 costs.

Sole director Geoffrey Gordon Shearn of Chester Road in Stockport pleaded guilty to breaching section 37 of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He was given a 12 month community order with requirement for 100 hours unpaid work and ordered to pay £5,000 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE specialist diving inspector Richard Martins said: "This case highlights the importance of ensuring that compressed breathing air sold to the public is safe. The quality of the air supplied is essential to the preservation of life.

"Suppliers of breathing air to the diving community and public should ensure that they use correctly installed and maintained equipment accompanied by regular testing of the air supplied. Further tragedy was narrowly averted through the quick response of the school staff, diving instructors, and the Manchester emergency services."

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3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. Further information regarding health and safety guidance for diving, visit <https://www.hse.gov.uk/diving/>

The post [Company and director sentenced after children were taken ill during](#)

[diving lesson](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).