

Window company hit for £6,500

Eastern Windows Manufacturing Co of Booth Street, Handsworth, Birmingham, was fined £5,000 with £1,480 costs by Coventry Magistrates' Court after pleading guilty to breaching Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, the maximum fine a Magistrates' Courts can impose for a breach of health and safety regulations.

On September 6th 2005, an employee fell 2.5 metres through a fragile roof whilst fitting new doors, windows and roof to a single storey extension at Townsend Road, Coventry. The man fractured his skull and vertebrae, has difficulty walking and is deaf in one ear.

Inspector Stephen Farthing said: "An employee suffered very serious injuries in this incident. Despite this, the company later sent a second man to work on the same roof without any additional protection from falling."

Aerial lift apprentice scoops top award

An aerial lift and telehandler apprentice - Stephen Vicary of The Platform Company - has won the UK's National Construction College's Apprentice of the year award.

Vicary, in his third year of his apprenticeship also won the Top Plant Mechanics - Access Platforms Apprentice award. (For details of other awards visit www.vertikal.net and put apprentices in the search box)



Stephen Vicary accepts his award from former boxing world champion Barry McGuigan

Watch out for employees on breaks

The Health and Safety Executive has warned of the importance of employers knowing what their staff, especially apprentices, do on their premises during meal breaks.

The warning follows the prosecution of S. Cartwright & Sons (Coachbuilders) Ltd of Atlantic Street, Broadheath in Altrincham, Greater Manchester, after a 16 year-old apprentice, Ashley Saunders, sustained fatal injuries after falling through a fragile roof whilst retrieving a football during a lunchtime kick-about. Saunders dragged a mobile work platform, used within the plant, to the front of the building and used it to

climb on to the roof to look for the ball. As he stepped onto the roof he fell 5.3 metres through a skylight to the concrete floor below and died from his injuries.

The company was fined £7,000 and ordered to pay £17,376 costs after pleading guilty at Manchester Crown Court to a charge under Regulation 8 (1) (c) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.



Who trained him then?

This summer while the PM was away the front of Downing street was cleaned, look at this man teetering on top a step ladder with a pressure washer alongside spiked railings and a three or four metre drop.



C&A

training

poor planning is blamed for this accident

Poor planning costs £17,000

Cheshire Crane Hire of Nant Road, Connah's Quay, Flintshire was fined £8,000 and ordered to pay full costs of £8,842 at Wirral Magistrates' Court after one of its 60 tonne All Terrain cranes tipped over last March at the Champion Spark Plug plant in Upton, Wirral due to a lack of suitable cribbing under the outriggers and poor lift planning.

According to HSE Inspector Neil Jamieson: "Frank Preston, Cheshire Crane's managing director, had estimated the weight of a chimney that had to be lifted at about six tonnes, however its actual weight was more than double that. He also failed to explain the type of contract to his client, nor did he ask him to sign any papers, which is essential good practice."

"It is essential that for all lifting operations, proper planning - including careful assessment of the ground conditions and appropriate methods of work - should be adopted. It is fortunate in this case that nobody was hurt, but there was the potential for fatalities." The crane was parked on a tarmac surface, but its outriggers were

extended onto the adjacent grass. The outrigger mats used were inadequate for the ground conditions and weight and once the crane took the weight of the 23 metre long steel stack from the outside wall of the building, the outriggers slipped off the mats and punched through the ground and the crane overturned.

Fortunately there were no injuries, although the carrier cab of the Tadano Faun crane crushed an electricity sub station, while its diesel and hydraulic tanks leaked out over the following days, contaminating a local brook. Cheshire Crane pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act in that it failed to ensure the safety of its employee.



The outrigger mats were inadequate for the ground conditions

IPAF launches apprenticeship

A working group led by Roger Bowden of Niftylift is developing an IPAF engineering apprenticeship designed to lead to a "technician" level qualification. The Federation is also launching the Job Access challenge among colleges in Europe, see page 63 for details.

Working hours Poll

In an on-line editorial we highlighted the fact that excessively long working days and weeks have to be a factor in reducing safety of some trades, such as tower crane operators and more particularly, erectors.

We asked:

Should the working hours of crane operators and erectors be controlled by law?
In total over the eight week period 823 people voted. 553 or 67% voted Yes 270 or 33% voted No