

Construction company fined after two workers injured in fall from height

A construction company has been fined after two workers were injured after falling through a ceiling at a site in Watford.

Luton Magistrates' Court heard how, on 6 December 2017, four bricklayers were working on a new build of three terraced houses, when they gained unrestricted access to a timber joisted floor. The floor collapsed. Two of the four workers managed to jump off during the collapse whilst the other two fell and suffered serious injuries.

Both of the employees are still unable to return to full time work. One spent two days in hospital after the incident and the other is still recovering from his injuries; it is not clear whether or not his injury will be life changing.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the Principal Contractor, S McMurray Ltd, had failed to safely install joist hangers correctly. There was no other structural support arrangement in place, such as propping the first floor from underneath. The floor was also overloaded with blockwork.

S McMurray Ltd, of Sacombe Road, Hertfordshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13 (1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The Company has been fined £16,500 and ordered to pay costs of £1236.60.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Rauf Ahmed said: *"Structural stability of floors under construction must be carefully risk assessed to ensure the appropriate control measures are in place to prevent collapse."*

"This incident could have been prevented had there been a sufficient risk assessment in place and the appropriate controls implemented."

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