

Unsafe gas work results in £280k fine

A building services company has been fined following unsafe gas work which resulted in gas escapes and fires at two occupied properties at a new housing development in Warwickshire.

EGP Building Services Limited (EGP) was contracted to undertake gas work at the Bellway Homes development at Heathcote Park between August 2016 and May 2018. During this time, gas hob installations were undertaken by EGP fitters who were either not gas safe registered or by operatives who were gas safe registered but were working outside the scope of their registration and not competent to undertake such work.

The HSE's investigation found that more than 60 properties were identified as being immediately dangerous and posed a serious fire and explosion risk to the occupants. The investigation revealed the company had failed to ensure that a system was in place to adequately and effectively plan, supervise and monitor the installation of gas hobs to ensure it was being carried out in accordance with industry requirements.

EGP Building Services Ltd of Craftsmans Way, Leicester, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety etc Act 1974. The company was fined £280,000 and ordered to pay costs of £918.00.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Helen Chesworth said: *"The law is clear that companies must conduct their business without putting members of the public at risk. EGP Building Services Limited exposed members of the public to the risk of serious injury or death through unsafe gas work carried out at over 60 properties and it was fortunate that no one was harmed.*

"HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate action against companies who disregard the law and place lives at risk. Working with gas appliances is difficult, specialised and potentially very dangerous, so it is vital that this is only undertaken by trained and competent engineers who are registered with Gas Safe Register."