

Utility management company's £400k fine for farm's powerline electrocution

A utility management services provider must pay £400,000 after a driver operating on its site received a fatal electrical shock when the extendable grab arm on his lorry came into contact with an overhead power line.

Luton Magistrates' Court heard the driver, Darren Waterman, was employed by lorry hire firm Just Grab Services. On 16 September 2016 he was unloading material at Fillets Farm in Hunsdon when the grab arm hit an 11kW overhead power line.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that London-based Options Energy Resource had risk-assessed working under overhead power lines but failed to implement a safe system of work for doing so.

Construction work was poorly planned, and employees had not been trained, it said.

Options pleaded guilty to breaching s 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. It must also pay costs of £17,242.

HSE inspector Samantha Wells said the accident was *"caused by the failure of Options Energy Resource to implement safe systems of work and to ensure that health and safety documentation was communicated and followed"*.

She added: *"Every year in the UK two people are killed and many more are injured when machinery comes into contact with, or close proximity to, overhead power lines."*



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