

Comment

The Installer

September 2018

Profinder Limited

I can't believe people are still getting convicted for allowing unsafe things to happen on the sites they are operating on.

Whether they are small builders or window installers, they really ought to know better – and they should be able to see how devastating a fall from height is not only to the victim but also to the family.

And what's more, given the number that get caught out by either Trading Standards or hidden TV cameras, I can't believe people are still claiming more work needs to be done to fix a problem than is required...conning hard working homeowners out of their even harder to come by cash.

A building company and its director were sentenced on October 9. BBS Improvements Limited and sole director Barrie John Henry Birch were sentenced after a joint investigation by Worcestershire Trading Standards Service and the Health and Safety Executive uncovered a string of health and safety and fraud offences.

Worcester Crown Court heard how Mr Birch, operating under BBS Improvements Ltd, was employed to carry out building work on a domestic property in Redditch in May 2017. A complaint was made to Trading Standards who instructed an expert to examine the roof. The expert confirmed that the work was wholly unnecessary and that the work done had no value whatsoever.

During the course of their investigations Trading Standards also uncovered the company was carrying out work at height without scaffolding and that there were no measures in place to prevent employees from falling. People were walking on the roof of the house with no safety measures in place to prevent them from falling and Mr Birch was present and fully aware of the people working unsafely on the roof.

Birch admitted an offence under the Fraud Act 2006 and under the Consumer Protection Act and under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – and asked for 5 other, similar matters to be taken into consideration including two offences of failing to provide a 10 Year Insurance Backed Guarantee.

Birch was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, (sadly, suspended for 2 years), ordered to do 250 hours of unpaid work and was disqualified from being a Company Director for 5 years. He was ordered to pay compensation to the victims and to make a contribution to the prosecution costs.

Asbestos

October 9 also saw a Manchester based businessman prosecuted after failing to check whether asbestos was present in a building he owned before starting major refurbishment works. He got a six months prison sentence, suspended for two years and 250 community service hours.

Doing it right

The Window Company (Contracts) Ltd, the first member to receive the Gold Status award of the GGF GLASS Charter Merit Scheme has adopted wellbeing as part of their business model to make employees feel safe in discussing health conditions. The business understands how this investment is good for their workforce and in turn for the business.

Well done The Window Company!

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