

# MHS Homes Fined £528,000 for Underground Cable Strike

## Description

## Introduction

On April 24, 2024, MHS Homes Limited, a housing company based in Kent, was fined £528,000 for breaching the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The case, which involved a serious safety lapse, highlighted the company's failure to ensure the safety of its workers during excavation work.

## Case Background

### Incident Details

- **Date of Incident:** January 10, 2023
- **Location:** A tenant's back garden in Kent
- **Task:** Repairing three fence posts

During the repair work, an MHS Homes employee struck an underground electrical cable while using a breaker to break through concrete. This resulted in burns to the worker's face. [The incident occurred because the company failed to provide adequate information about the location of underground services and the necessary tools to safely excavate around them.](#)

### Investigation Findings

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) conducted an investigation and found several critical lapses:

- **Lack of Information:** MHS Homes did not provide employees with information on the location of underground services.
- **Inadequate Tools:** The company failed to supply suitable equipment to detect and safely excavate around underground services.
- **Previous Risk Assessment:** [A risk assessment conducted in 2017 had identified the risk of underground services, but no measures were taken to mitigate this risk.](#)

## Legal Proceedings

### Charges and Verdict

- **Regulation Breached:** Regulation 16 (2), by virtue of non-compliance with Regulation 25 (4), of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- **Verdict:** Guilty

- **Fine:** £528,000
- **Additional Costs:** £4,122 in costs

[MHS Homes Limited pleaded guilty to the charges and was sentenced on April 24, 2024.](#)

## Statements from HSE

HSE inspector Peter Bruce emphasized the importance of identifying underground services before any excavation work. He stated, “Underground services are widespread and represent a significant risk. It is important measures are taken to identify them before any excavation work is undertaken. On this occasion, an electrical cable was struck and a worker suffered minor injuries. [However, it could have been much worse and potentially fatal](#)”.

## Implications and Lessons Learned

### Safety Measures

The case underscores the critical need for:

- **Service Plans:** Obtaining service plans prior to excavation work.
- **Proper Equipment:** Providing employees with the correct tools and detection equipment.
- **Regular Training:** Ensuring workers are trained to recognize and mitigate risks associated with underground services.

### Industry Impact

This case serves as a stark reminder to other companies in the construction and housing sectors about the importance of adhering to safety regulations. The substantial fine imposed on MHS Homes Limited reflects the seriousness of the breach and the potential consequences of neglecting worker safety.

## Conclusion

The MHS Homes Limited case highlights the severe repercussions of failing to comply with construction safety regulations. It serves as a crucial lesson for all companies to prioritize the safety of their employees by providing adequate information, tools, and training. The verdict not only holds MHS Homes accountable but also sets a precedent for stringent enforcement of safety standards in the industry.

### CATEGORY

1. Kent

### POST TAG

1. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM)
2. Construction Sector
3. Electrical

4. Excavation
5. MHS Homes

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### **Date**

10/11/2024

### **Date Created**

26/04/2024