

## BT engineer sustained broken back in 7 m fall

British Telecom (BT) must pay almost £600,000 after one of its engineers was seriously injured when he fell from a loft in east London.



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In May 2011, David Spurgeon was working alone, fixing a telephone fault in the roof void of a block of flats in Tower Hamlets. He lost his balance and fell through the ceiling, landing on a concrete stairwell 7 m below. He broke his back and both ankles.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigated the incident and found management failures by BT, including inadequate planning of work taking place near fragile surfaces as well as checking that it was carried out safely.

At the Old Bailey, BT was found guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Safety and Health and Work Act. It was fined £500,000 and ordered to pay costs of £98,914.

In court the judge criticised BT for attempting to blame the incident on its engineers, stating that the company's approach was "not necessary, misplaced and unfortunate".

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