



Matt Kean
Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation

MEDIA RELEASE

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WINDOW GLASS COMPANY FINED \$1 MILLION FOR WHS BREACH

Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation Matt Kean has welcomed a District Court decision to fine a window glass company \$1 million – the highest ever fine imposed in NSW under the *Work Health and Safety Act*.

The decision relates to an incident on 19 June 2014, in which a contractor of WGA Pty Ltd sustained an electric shock while working on a window ledge at a residential-apartment construction site in South Hurstville.

The 49-year-old man was installing a piece of aluminium to the outside of a window when the power jumped to the metal from nearby 33,000-volt power lines feeding the Illawarra train line. The worker suffered burns to 30 per cent of his body.

Following an investigation by SafeWork NSW, WGA Pty Ltd was charged with a breach of the *Work Health and Safety Act*, and convicted and sentenced on Friday in the District Court.

Prior to the incident, a SafeWork NSW inspector and Sydney Trains had provided advice to WGA Pty Ltd about working safely around these power lines. However, WGA Pty Ltd did not heed this advice and the court found the company failed to take the necessary steps to protect the worker – such as having electricity to the power lines isolated before undertaking external work to the building.

His Honour Judge Scotting imposed a fine of \$1 million on WGA Pty Ltd. This is the highest fine imposed ever in NSW under the *Work Health and Safety Act*.

“No matter what kind of work you do, everyone who has a job in NSW has a right to a safe workplace,” Mr Kean said.

“SafeWork NSW plays a vital role in protecting workers, through important education programs and taking legal action against employers who breach relevant legislation.

“I commend SafeWork NSW for bringing this matter to court and highlighting the importance of working safely around power lines,” he said.

The defendant did not attend court on Friday upon sentencing and has 28 days to lodge a notice of intention to appeal.