

## Framer Setting Roof Truss Falls 20 Feet

### INCIDENT FACTS

**REPORT #:** 71-186-2019s

**REPORT DATE:** September 2, 2019

**INCIDENT DATE:** April 28, 2017

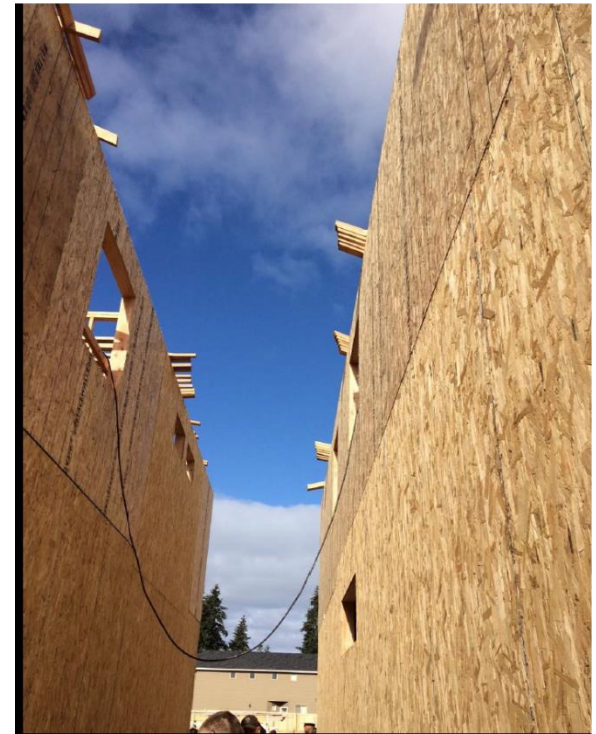
**VICTIM:** 55 years old

**INDUSTRY:** New single-family housing  
construction

**OCCUPATION:** Framer

**SCENE:** Two-story, single family house  
under construction

**EVENT TYPE:** Fall



A 55-year-old framer died when he fell 20 feet from the top plate of a two story single-family house under construction.

The framer was employed by a single-family housing contractor.

He had worked for the employer for four days. He had 10 years' experience framing.

On the day of the incident, the framer and two other workers were at the job site where they were building a house. Their task was to install roof trusses. The previous day, they had installed and blocked three trusses.

The crew arrived onsite at 8:00 a.m. They set up their equipment to begin installing trusses. When the site foreman called a break a half hour later, the framer did not join them.

The two workers went to look for the framer and found him lying unconscious on the ground below where they were going to install trusses.

He died of spinal injuries 15 days later.

State investigators found that the framer fell 20 feet from the house's six-inch-wide top plate.

He was not using fall protection.

Investigators also found that the employer did not have a written fall protection work plan; workers did not understand fall protection requirements; the accident prevention program did not address job-specific safety; a safety walk-around was not done; and the framer did not receive a safety orientation.



## Photos 1 & 2

Two views of the two-story house under construction and the location where the framer fell 20 feet from the top plate while preparing to install roof trusses.





**Photo 3**

Interior view of house. The arrow points to the approximate position of where the framer was standing on the top plate when he fell.



**Photo 4**

Interior view of roof trusses staged on house top plate.

## Requirements

Make sure the appropriate fall protection system is provided, installed, and implemented according to the requirements when employees are exposed to fall hazards of ten feet or more to the ground or lower level while working on any surface that does not meet the definition of a walking/working surface covered in [WAC 296-155-24609](#).

See [WAC 296-155-24611\(1\)\(c\)](#)

## Requirements

Develop and implement a written fall protection work plan including each area of the work place where the employees are assigned and where fall hazards of 10 feet or more exist.

See [WAC 296-155-24611\(2\)\(a\)](#)



## Requirements

Employers must develop a formal accident-prevention program, tailored to the needs of the particular operation and the type of hazard involved. The program elements must include, among others:

- 1) an on-the-job review of the practices necessary to perform the initial assignments in a safe manner, and
- 2) at the beginning of each job and at least weekly thereafter, conduct a walk-around safety inspection.

See [WAC 296-155-110](#)

## Recommendations

**FACE investigators concluded that, to prevent similar occurrences during initial truss installation:**

- Do not perform work while standing on top plates.
- Use interior or exterior mounted bracket scaffolds, boom or scissor lifts, and platform ladders or stepladders.

## Recommendations



Install roof trusses from an interior bracket scaffold.



Use an exterior bracket scaffold.

Photos: OSHA



Use platform ladders inside a structure to install roof trusses.

## Resources

Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Installing Roof Trusses, OSHA Fact Sheet.

<https://www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/training/reducing-falls-installing-roof-trusses-factsheet.pdf>

Fall Protection for Setting and Bracing Wood Trusses and Rafters, Oregon OSHA. <https://osha.oregon.gov/OSHAPubs/2824ae.pdf>

*This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

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