

# INJURY NARRATIVE

## Roofer Falls 20 Feet from Roof

**Industry:** Roofing Contractors  
**Task:** Installing metal roofing  
**Occupation:** Roofer  
**Type of Incident:** Fall from roof

**Incident Date:** April 24, 2014  
**Release Date:** August 10, 2015  
**SHARP Report No.:** 71-139-2015

On April 24, 2014, a 46-year-old roofer suffered multiple fractures and a traumatic brain injury when he fell 20 feet from a roof. The incident occurred at a new single-family residential construction site. The injured worker had 20 years' roofing experience. He had previously worked with the employer, a roofing and siding contractor. This was his first day on this job site; the rest of the crew had started work the day before. He was working on a crew with two other roofers and a foreman. They were installing snap-lock sheet metal roofing panels. It had been raining on and off throughout the day and the metal roofing deck was wet and slippery. All of the crew members were wearing tennis shoes. The crew was in a hurry to get the job done. At about 1:35 p.m., the injured worker was on the 5:12 pitch metal roof when he slipped and rolled off the roof onto a scaffold and then rolled



Photo of incident scene showing the sheet metal roof from which the roofer slipped and the scaffold deck he then rolled off and fell 20 feet to the ground.

off it and fell 20 feet to the ground. A neighbor found the victim lying on the ground and alerted the crew who then summoned emergency medical services. Medics transported the victim to a hospital. He suffered multiple broken ribs, a broken clavicle, a collapsed lung, and a traumatic brain injury which resulted in a coma. More than a year later, he still suffers from conditions caused by his injuries and is unable to work. Investigators found that he was not using fall protection.

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### Requirements

- Regardless of work activity, employers must ensure that employees exposed to fall hazards of four feet or more while working on a roof with a pitch greater than four in twelve use one of the following: fall restraint system, fall arrest system, or positioning device system.  
See [WAC 296-155-24609\(7\)\(a\)](#).
- Develop and implement a written fall protection work plan that includes each area of the work place where the employees are assigned and where fall hazards of ten feet or more exist.  
See [WAC 296-155-24611\(2\)](#).
- Substantial footwear made of leather or other equally firm material and that provide firm footing shall be worn by employees. Tennis shoes, shoes with canvas tops, or thin or soft-soled shoes shall not be worn.  
See [WAC 296-155-212](#)

### Recommendations

- When working to get a job done according to a schedule, do not compromise safety.
- Wear footwear with slip-resistant soles to reduce slipping hazards.
- Avoid working on wet metal roofs.

### Resource

Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Installing Standing Seam Metal Roofs.  
<https://www.osha.gov/Publication/s/reducing-falls-installing-standing-seam-metal-roofs.pdf>

This narrative was developed to alert employers and employees of a serious traumatic injury to 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 injury.

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