

Fatality Narrative

Roofer Falls from Roof After Un-clipping from Lifeline*

Industry: Roofing contractors
Occupation: Roofer
Task: Installing roofing material
Type of Incident: Fall from roof

Release Date: October 22, 2007
Case No.: 06WA080
SHARP Report No.: 71-62-2007

On September 28, 2006, a roofer fell from a roof, and suffered fatal injuries. The 58-year-old victim had worked for a roofing contractor for about 6 years. On the day of the incident, the victim was installing a roof on a two-story single-family house under construction. Prior to going up on the roof the victim filled out a fall protection work plan and posted it on the front of the building. He went on to the roof wearing his fall harness, attached his safety rope, and engaged his fall protection system. He then began laying felt paper. At 8:59 a.m. the victim fell 23 feet from the roof, landing on the ground below. The homeowner found the victim and called emergency medical services and the victim was transported to a hospital. The victim was conscious and stated that he had disconnected his safety rope from his fall harness so that he could untangle it. He then stepped into the opening of a small vent pipe that was covered with felt paper and lost his balance, causing him to fall. Sixty-seven days later the victim died from medical conditions aggravated by his fall injuries.



Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by code)

- ! Employers / Employees should not only develop a written fall prevention plan but need to ensure that all elements of the fall prevention plan are followed at the work site. The plan must identify all fall hazards and the protective system to be used.
- ! Once the fall prevention plan has been developed, a competent person must continue to identify potential fall hazards prior to each project and during daily inspections of the site.
- Pay attention to hazards associated with routine and non-routine tasks, which could include preventing the possible entanglement of safety-lines or having a process in place to untangle lines while maintaining fall protection integrity.
- ! Properly identify, mark, and protect all roof/floor openings and holes as required to eliminate tripping and fall hazards.
- ! Employers must assure that fall protection is continuous anytime the employee is exposed to a fall hazard.
- ! Employees must be trained on all elements of the fall protection work plan.

State Wide Statistics: This was the 48th out of 81 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2006, and was the 19th out of 23 construction-related fatalities.

**This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. The information in this notice 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.*

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE/>.

SHARP – Promoting Safer, Healthier Workplaces

