

FATALITY NARRATIVE

Roofing Contractor Falls 25 Feet from Church Roof

Industry: Roofing Contractors
Task: Nailing down roofing materials
Occupation: Roofing contractor
Type of Incident: Fall from roof

Incident Date: September 9, 2015
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In September of 2015, a 34-year-old roofing contractor died after falling 25 feet from a church roof. The victim was a co-owner of a father and son roofing company. He and his father were subcontracted to complete a roof on a newly constructed church. Both were experienced roofers. They had been working on the site for about a week. On the day of the incident, the weather was sunny and warm. They were the only workers at the site, and both were working on the roof. It was a low pitch roof with a 1 in 12 slope. The victim was working on the edge of the roof nailing down roofing materials. Neither of the roofers was using fall protection, nor was there any in place on the roof or on site. The father looked up from his work and did not see his son on the roof. He went to the side of the roof where his son had been and looked down. His son was lying on the sidewalk below, bleeding. He had fallen 25 feet from the roof edge. The father attempted CPR



Incident scene showing the location where a roofing contractor who was not using fall protection fell from the roof of a church 25 feet to a concrete sidewalk.

and then called 911. First responders arrived and, after attempting further CPR, declared the victim deceased.

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Requirements

- Plan.**
Develop and implement a written fall protection work plan that includes each area of the work place where employees are assigned and where hazards of ten feet or more exist.
See [WAC 296-155-24611\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- Provide.**
Ensure that the appropriate fall protection system is provided, installed, and implemented when employees are exposed to fall hazards of 10 feet or more to the ground or lower level while engaged in roofing work on a low pitched roof. A low pitched roof has a slope equal to or less than 4 in 12.
See [WAC 296-155-24611\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- Train.**
Prior to permitting employees into areas where fall hazards exist you must ensure employees are trained and instructed in the items described in the fall protection work plan.
See [WAC 296-155-24611\(2\)\(b\)](#)

Recommendation

- Under specific circumstances, business owner/operators may be exempt from workplace regulations, as was the case in this incident. However, they are advised to follow safe work practices.

Resources

Roofing Work. Washington State Department of Labor and Industries.
www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/RoofingWork/

Protecting Roofing Workers. OSHA
www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3755.pdf

This narrative 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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