

## Roofer Falls 18 Feet from Wet Roof

### INCIDENT FACTS

**REPORT #:** 71-178-2019s

**REPORT DATE:** February 21, 2019

**INCIDENT DATE:** March 8, 2018

**VICTIM:** 50 years old

**INDUSTRY:** Roofing contractors

**OCCUPATION:** Roofer

**SCENE:** Two-story, single-family residence

**EVENT TYPE:** Fall



A 50-year-old roofer died when he fell 18 feet from a house roof.

He had 20 years of experience as a roofer and had worked for his employer's roofing company for two years.

He was part of a three-person crew installing a metal roof on a two-story house.

Shortly after 8 a.m., the crew was setting up for the day. This was their third day at the work site. The company owner had not yet arrived.

A light rain was falling. The victim, wearing a harness, climbed up a ladder and went onto the steep slope 8/12 pitch roof. He walked horizontally along the roof for about 25 feet. No one else was on the roof.

The crew supervisor was below in the yard. After a few minutes, the supervisor called to the victim, but got no answer. He went looking for him and found him unconscious lying on a concrete patio. The other roofer stayed with the victim while the supervisor called 911. Emergency responders arrived after a few minutes. The victim died while being transported by ambulance.

The medical examiner gave the cause of death as “multiple blunt force injuries” resulting from a fall from the roof.

The state investigator found that the victim's rope grab lifeline was attached to a roof anchor, but he was not tied off to it when he slid on the wet roof underlayment and fell off the roof edge.

*Eight workers in the roofing contractors industry died in falls in the past five years.*



**Photo 1.** Incident scene showing where the roofer slipped and fell.



**Photo 2.** Roof of the house showing the location of the lifeline for rope grab attachment.



**Photo 3.** Close-up of the anchor.

## 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 4/12 use one of the following systems: fall restraint, fall arrest, or positioning device.

See [WAC 296-155-24609\(7\)\(a\)](#)

## **Recommendations**

Always use fall protection during roofing operations.



## Resources

Roofing work, Washington State Dept. of Labor and Industries.

[www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/RoofingWork](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/RoofingWork)

Roofing safety, OSHA.

[www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.athruz?pType=Industry&pID=548](http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.athruz?pType=Industry&pID=548)

*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.*

Developed by Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Washington 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 grant# 5U60OH008487). For more information visit [www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE).