

Roofer Falls 20 Feet from Roof

Industry: Roofing Contractors

Task: Installing metal roofing

Occupation: Roofer

Type of Incident: Fall from roof





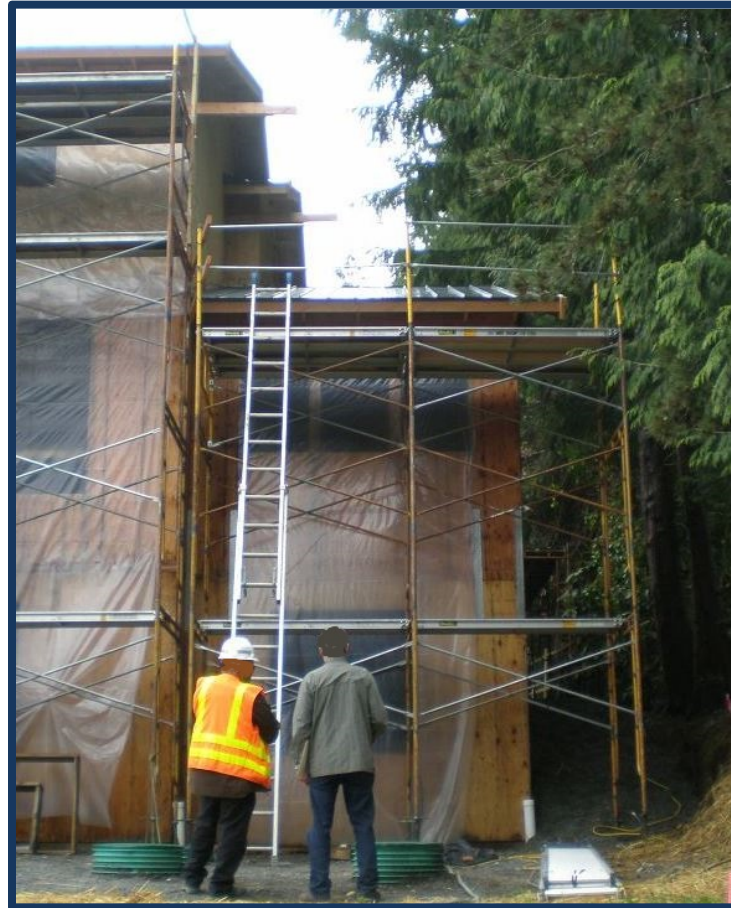
INJURY NARRATIVE

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 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 the injured worker was not using fall protection.



Incident scene showing the sheet metal roof deck from which the roofer slipped and rolled off onto the scaffold and then rolled off it and fell 20 feet to the ground.



Illustration 1: Roofer using fall protection system

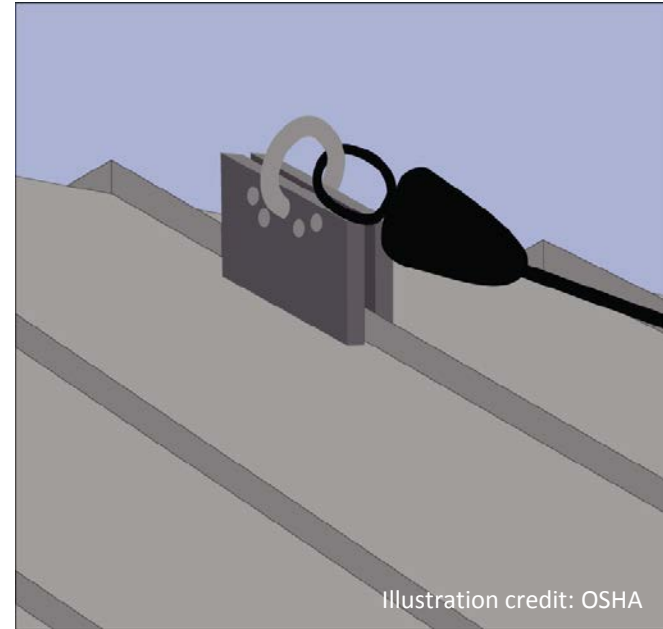


Illustration 2: Fall protection anchor on metal roof.

Use of fall protection systems can reduce the risk of falls for roofers installing metal roofs.



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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](#)



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Recommendations

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



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Resource

Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Installing Standing Seam Metal Roofs.

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/reducing-falls-installing-standing-seam-metal-roofs.pdf>



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This bulletin 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.

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# 5 U60 OH008487-09). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277.