

## Framer Falls 8 Feet from Rim Joist

### INCIDENT FACTS

**REPORT #:** 71-264-2025s

**REPORT DATE:** March 17, 2025

**INCIDENT DATE:** July 15, 2022

**WORKER:** 44 years old

**INDUSTRY:** Siding Contractors

**OCCUPATION:** Construction Framer

**SCENE:** H-2A housing construction site

**EVENT TYPE:** Fall from elevation



A 44-year-old experienced framer fell eight feet from a rim joist while working on a wall. He worked for his employer, a residential contractor, for five years.

The framer was with a co-worker removing previously installed second-level floor joists to relocate an inside kitchen wall that was framed in the wrong place. After finishing his task, he went to an outside wall where his co-worker was working.

He sat down on a rim joist to wait. The joist was eight feet above the floor decking and had a window opening just below it. He was straddling the joist to support himself above the opening. He then leaned to the inside of the wall and lost balance. Unable to regain balance due to the opening, he fell headfirst to the floor decking below.

His co-worker saw him fall, called 911, and began CPR. When first responders arrived, he was breathing but unresponsive. He was then airlifted to the hospital and placed on life support. He died five days later.

Following the incident, investigators found:

- The framer fell from an inside wall height of eight feet, three-quarters inches. The fall hazard to the outside of the wall was nine feet, nine and three-quarters inches. Fall protection was not used because workers were under the 10-foot trigger height for fall protection requirements while installing structural members.
- The framer attended weekly safety meetings where fall protection was a recurring main topic.
- The employer had a written accident prevention program (APP) with a fall protection plan.
- The project manager for the general contractor was on the jobsite when the incident occurred.

# FATALITY NARRATIVE



**Photo 1.** Framers fell from rim joist (x) above window opening to floor deck.

# FATALITY NARRATIVE



**Photo 2.** Hole in  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch decking is from the impact of the framer's head.

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**Photo 3.** Circle shows area where framer fell.

## **Requirements**

Employers must:

- Maintain conditions within the workplace that will not endanger the health, safety or welfare of employees.  
See [WAC 296-800-11005](#)



## **Recommendations**

FACE investigators concluded, that to help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- When workers must walk on top plates, joists, rafters, trusses, beams or other similar structural members, provide fall protection by using scaffolding, aerial lifts, edge protection platforms, guardrails, safety nets, or personal fall protection systems. Train workers to use these methods and equipment properly and periodically evaluate their fall protection knowledge and skills.

## **Recommendations**

- Arrive on-site before work begins or appoint a supervisor to jointly conduct a site hazard assessment with workers to identify fall hazards and develop fall protection solutions.
- During the pre-job safety meeting, review the site hazard assessment and discuss workers' responsibilities to use fall protection and follow fall prevention safe work practices.

## **Resources**

### [Falls \(From Heights\) safety resources](#)

Washington State Dept. of Labor & Industries

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*This narrative was developed to alert employers and workers of a tragic incident 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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