



# Hazard Alert

*Topic Summary:*

## Fatal Hazard – Falling through skylights and roof and floor openings

**Employers:** Please take time to read this important information and share it with your employees.

Since 1998, eight construction workers in Washington State have been killed when they fell through skylights or roof and floor openings.

- On Sept. 4, 2003, a construction laborer fell 50 feet through an unguarded skylight during re-roofing operations at a steel plant. The victim handed a roof panel to a co-worker and then slipped, fell backwards, and slid on his back onto an unguarded fiberglass skylight. The skylight failed and he fell 50 feet, landing on machinery below. The victim died at the scene.
- On Nov. 22, 2002, a construction worker fell from a roof through an unguarded skylight opening. The victim was laying out plastic sheet over several skylight openings when he fell through one of the openings and landed on the concrete floor 9 feet 10 inches below. He suffered severe injuries and was transported to a hospital where he died 10 days later.

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### Where can I learn more?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has published an alert called “Preventing Falls of Workers Through Skylights and Roof and Floor Openings.” This alert has recommendations and precautions that will help protect your employees from being seriously injured or killed. The key precautions in protecting workers from falls through skylights, roof and floor openings are:

- All openings must be properly covered or guarded at all times.
- Skylights must either be guarded or designed for the weight of a person with a safety factor.
- Workers must be trained on correct procedures and hazard identification.

You can get a copy of the NIOSH alert from the NIOSH web site at:

[www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-156/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-156/)

### How can I get help from Labor and Industries?

The Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) has assistance available at no charge. Please contact one of the regional offices listed below and ask for the WISHA\* Consultation Supervisor.

| <b>Counties</b>  | <b>Telephone Number</b>            |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom   | 425-290-1431                       |
| King   | 206-515-2837<br>or<br>206-835-1146 |
| Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Pierce   | 253-596-3917                       |
| Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Thurston, Wahkiakum                          | 360-902-5472                       |
| Northwest Adams, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Okanogan, Walla Walla, Yakima | 509-886 6570                       |
| Southeast Adams, Asotin, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Whitman                   | 509-324 2543                       |

### **Online Resources**

- The Washington Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) web site at [www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE](http://www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE)
- WISHA Safety and Health regulations: [www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety/Rules](http://www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety/Rules)

Other rules may apply.

\*WISHA: Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act, the state equivalent of OSHA. L&I's WISHA Services Division administers workplace safety and health regulations.