

Case 476. 75-year-old maintenance laborer died from an approximate 5-foot fall from a fiberglass stepladder with aluminum steps to a concrete floor with a carpet overlay.

A 75-year-old male maintenance laborer died from an approximate 5-foot fall from a fiberglass stepladder with aluminum steps to a concrete floor with a carpet overlay. The decedent was working alone, removing a defective ballast for 120-volt fluorescent lighting located approximately 10 feet above the floor. He did not utilize lockout to isolate electrical energy, did not use a volt meter to verify, and did not use insulated tools. When he did not show up for coffee break at 10am, employees looked for him. The employees found the decedent 10:30am, laying on the floor, approximately 10 feet away from his ladder, which was also laying on the floor. One side of the light fixture had pulled away from the ceiling. The employees called for emergency response and the decedent was transported to a local hospital, where he died several days from injury complications. After the incident, an employee tried to turn on the lights in the room but they did not come on so he went outside to the panel and found two breakers were tripped that were for the lights. While fixing the light, the employee noticed that the white wire was cut and the black wire was still intact.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citation to the employer at the conclusion of its investigation.

Serious: SAFETY-RELATED WORK PRACTICES, GI PART 40

- RULE 408.14003(2): Live parts to which an employee may be exposed shall be de-energized before the employee works on or near them.

The electrical was not de-energized and then verified before changing out a ballast in the bunk room of *incident* cabin.

- RULE 408.14002(2): Employees who are in occupations that are listed in table 1 face such a risk of electric shock and are required to be trained. Other employees who also may reasonably be expected to face a comparable risk of injury due to electrical shock or other electrical hazards shall also be trained.

Employees were not trained how to properly de-energize, lockout, verify there is no live electrical, and use proper insulated tools before changing out a ballast in the bunkroom of *incident* cabin.)

- RULE 408.14009(6): When working near exposed energized conductors or circuit parts, each employee shall use insulated tools or handling equipment if the tools or handling equipment might make contact with the conductors or parts.

Insulated tools were not used when changing a light fixture ballast in the bunk room of *incident* cabin.