

Case 497. 41-year-old carpenter died after falling approximately 18 feet through an unguarded roof skylight to a concrete floor.

A 41-year-old male carpenter died after falling approximately 18 feet through an unguarded roof skylight to a concrete floor. The decedent's employer was contracted to remove the existing roof and install a new roof. The decedent and a coworker were on the roof, preparing the for the work to be performed that day. They used a ladder positioned at the back of the building to access the roof. There were 72 skylights on the roof; a green X was spray-painted on 42 of the skylights signifying the skylight was being removed and decked in afterwards. Thirty skylights were in the process of being replaced (having new lenses placed on them). The decedent's coworker saw him winding up an extension cord. When the decedent took a step backward, he tripped over the edge of the unguarded skylight and fell approximately 18 feet to the concrete floor below. His coworker ran over to the skylight and after seeing the decedent not moving, ran to the ladder, descended from the roof, got in his car and drove to the front of the building. He ran to the decedent and then called for emergency response. The decedent was breathing, but weakly. Emergency responders arrived and assumed care. The decedent was transported to a nearby hospital where he died the next day.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citations at the conclusion of its investigation.

SERIOUS: Rule 408.40114(1): CS Part 1 General Rules: An employer shall develop, maintain, and coordinate with employees an accident prevention program, a copy of which shall be available at the worksite.

Accident prevention program not coordinated with employees. Accident prevention program not used in conjunction with work practices.

SERIOUS: CS Part 45 Fall Protection REF 408.44502

- 1926.501(b)(4)(i): Each employee on walking/working surfaces shall be protected from falling through holes (including skylights) more than 6 feet (1.8 m) above lower levels, by personal fall arrest systems, covers, or guardrail systems erected around such holes.

No fall protection systems were in use around skylights while roofing.

- 1926.502(i)(2): All other covers shall be capable of supporting, without failure, at least twice the weight of employees, equipment, and materials that may be imposed on the cover at any one time.

Skylight cover is not capable of withstanding employee weight.

- 1926.503(a)(1): The employer shall provide a training program for each employee who might be exposed to fall hazards. The program shall enable each employee to recognize the hazards of falling and shall train each employee in the procedures to be followed in order to minimize these hazards.

The employer did not provide fall protection training. Previous training was not verified by employer.

- 1926.503(b)(1): The employer shall verify compliance with paragraph (a) of this section by preparing a written certification record. The written certification record shall contain the name or other identity of the employee trained, the date(s) of the training, and the signature of the person who conducted the training or the signature of the employer. If the employer relies on training conducted by another employer or completed prior to the effective date of this section, the certification record shall indicate the date the employer determined the prior training was adequate rather than the date of actual training.

The employer did not prepare written certification.