

Case 503. 55-year-old pallet repairer died from complications of a fall to a cement floor.

A 55-year-old male pallet repairer died from complications of a fall to a cement floor. The decedent was working in an area where pallets were sorted and repaired. The workspace contained loose boards held together by banding on pallets; these were used for repair of damaged pallets. Nearby was a table for placement of pallets during repair and a roller conveyor on the floor for stacking and manually moving finished/repared pallets. The banding on the pallets of loose board was cut one-to-two times per week to allow retrieval of the boards. It appeared that the decedent was walking back to the pallet repair station. It is unknown if he was carrying any material. It appeared he tripped on some of the banding that was on the floor, falling and striking his elbow. On the day of the incident (Day 1) he reported the fall and was asked by his employer if he wanted to seek medical treatment. The decedent declined. Some time passed, and the decedent asked and received permission to go home. Later that evening, his spouse took him to a local hospital, where it was found that he had a fractured elbow. In the early morning of Day 3 he died in the hospital. It was later determined that he had sustained internal injuries when he fell.

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

SERIOUS: 1910.22(a)(1): GI PART 2, WALKING-WORKING SURFACES [REF 408.10202]

The employer must ensure all places of employment, passageways, storerooms, service rooms, and walking-working surfaces are kept in a clean, orderly, and sanitary condition.

Walking and working surfaces were not kept clean and orderly in the pallet repair area in that the green plastic banding used to hold the pallet material together was in the walkway which caused an employee to trip and fall on *Date*, 2018. (*MIFACE removed the date of the incident*).