

**Case 159. 31-year-old installation/repair service technician died after falling from an unknown height.**

A 31-year-old male installation/repair service technician died after falling from an unknown height from an unknown location (ladder or tree). The decedent was installing cable service for a homeowner. Behind the residence was the telephone strand. The telephone strand had downward slope between the two support poles. A tree was located in the same area where the decedent had placed a 28-foot fiberglass portable extension ladder with adjustable hooks attached at the top of the ladder. The ladder had rubber boots with a rigid design and a metal spur wheel on each rail. To access the strand terminal, he placed the ladder against the telephone strand. It appears placed the ladder with an appropriate angle (4:1) against the line in compliance with MIOSHA requirements. To support the ladder against the telephone strand, both ladder hooks should be in contact with the strand. In this incident, due to the downward “swoop” of the cable, only one hook rested directly on the line and the other hook was above the line. The homeowner heard the decedent move the ladder to the line and saw him on the ladder while the ladder was positioned on the line. A short time later, the homeowner heard a “thump.” Upon seeing the decedent on the ground, the homeowner called 911. Emergency response arrived and the decedent was transported to a local hospital where he was declared dead. Upon MIOSHA inspection, the ladder’s metal spur wheels were in the retracted position. The rubber boot, designed to be used on hard surfaces, had dirt in the boot ridges. The decedent had not lashed or strapped the ladder hooks, nor had he worn a safety belt and tied off to an appropriate structure as per the company safety procedure.

Based upon the information collected at the time of the investigation, MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division did not document any conditions that led to the issuance of a citation.