

Case 243. 47-year-old Hispanic male construction laborer died as a result of an 11 to 12 foot fall from a ladder during demolition activities on the east side of a damaged abandoned building.

A 47-year-old Hispanic male construction laborer died as a result of an 11 to 12 foot fall from a ladder during demolition activities on the east side of a damaged abandoned building. The building had six roof bays; the roof area between bays two and three had fallen in. The decedent's employer intended to save a commonly shared wall. The employer shored the roof with 6-inch by 6-inch vertical wood columns under the existing horizontal wood beams and was planning to sever/disconnect the roof decking with a chain saw. The workers would then prep the roof to permit a mechanical excavator with thumb attachment to pull down the roof sections without damaging the shared wall and the west building. With his coworker standing nearby, the decedent was working at a height of 11 to 12 feet on an extension ladder at the southwest corner of bay 4. He was using a cutting torch to disconnect 1¼ -1½ inch diameter, 16-foot long tension rod(s) from the shared wall. The tension rods were located at a height of approximately 16 feet from the ground. When the cutting torch cut through the tension rods, one or both of the tension rods swung down/out striking the ladder he was utilizing. The roof section between bays 4 and 5 fell to the floor; the roof section did not strike either employee. The decedent fell to the south and landed on an acetylene/oxygen tank and then onto ground debris, causing his fatal injuries. The ladder fell to the ground. The owner returned to site by chance within a few minutes of incident. The owner found the decedent's coworker, who could not speak English, attempting to contact help. The owner called for emergency response. Emergency response arrived and the decedent was declared dead at the scene. The decedent had a blood alcohol level greater than 0.8%. The owner could not communicate with the surviving coworker.

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

SERIOUS: GENERAL RULES, PART 1, RULE 114(1)

An accident prevention program was not developed, maintained, and coordinated with employees.

Employees removing roof sections and demolishing warehouse. Employers Accident Prevention Program does not address any activities related to demotion work process. Employees unable to access or refer to plan to insure proper procedures are followed during building demolition.

SERIOUS: DEMOLITION, PART 20, RULE 2031(1)(a)

It was not ensured that all of the following were done before the start of a demolition operation:

- (a) An engineering survey of the structure and equipment is conducted by a competent person knowledgeable in demolition to determine all of the following:
 - (i) The condition of the foundation, roof, walls, and floors.
 - (ii) Whether any adjacent structure will be affected by the demolition.
 - (iii) The utility service entering the building.

(iv) Any other conditions and equipment affecting the safety of an employee.--

Building structure not properly supported during demolition process resulting in structural failure and roof collapse.

OTHER-THAN-SERIOUS: GENERAL RULES, PART 1, RULE 132(3)

A person who has a valid certificate in first aid training was not present at the worksite to render first aid.

Employees unable to render or receive immediate First Aid treatment at the jobsite.