

Case 248. 41-year-old male semi-truck driver died from complications of a head injury due to a fall from a semi/trailer bed.

A 41-year-old male semi-truck driver died from complications of a head injury due to a fall from a semi/trailer bed. The semi tractor had an attached flat-bed trailer upon which were items to be delivered. The decedent had made his last delivery and noted a mechanical issue with his truck. The decedent called the firm's maintenance department and the mechanic drove another tractor (Tractor #2) to the scene and together loaded and secured the decedent's tractor on the trailer. As the two workers were driving back to the firm's office, they stopped for snacks. The decedent indicated to the mechanic that he wanted to retrieve items from his tractor. As his coworker was checking securement on the passenger side, the decedent climbed onto the trailer. His coworker heard a sound on the driver's side of the truck. His coworker investigated and found the decedent on the ground. The ground surface consisted of hard gravel. The decedent indicated he fell from the top step of the towed tractor. MIOSHA measured the distance of the fall – 6¼ feet (the flat bed trailer bed was 39 inches above the ground and the top step of the tractor was 37 inches above the flat bed). The coworker drove to the hospital in the same city the firm's office was located in. The decedent was evaluated and released several hours later. The firm's owner picked up the decedent from the hospital and took him to the firm's office so he could get his personal vehicle. The decedent wanted to retrieve the items from Tractor #2. At approximately 7:00 am the next morning, the decedent, who was unconscious, was found by a coworker on the ground on the passenger side of Tractor #2. Emergency response was called and the decedent was transported to a local hospital, where he died after further resuscitative efforts.

MIOSHA General Industry Health and Safety Division did not issue the firm a violation citation at the conclusion of its investigation.