

**Case 288. 31-year-old roofer died when the ladder he had tethered to another ladder came apart causing him to slide down and fall from the roof edge.**

A 31-year-old male roofer died when the ladder he had tethered to another ladder to access a leak near a chimney on a two-story home came apart causing him to slide down and fall from the roof edge. The two ladders were being used to access the leak's location. The base ladder was a 40-foot aluminum extension ladder and the second ladder was the lower half of a 20-foot fiberglass extension ladder. The base 40-foot ladder was leaning on dry, shingled roof with a slope of 16/12. The base 40-foot ladder was placed with one safety foot on brick pavers and one safety foot in landscaped soil near a bush. The decedent set the base ladder against the roof eave, at an angle where 9 rungs of the extension ladder were laying on the roof. The decedent climbed the base ladder while holding the fiberglass ladder and then tethered the 20-foot lower half of the fiberglass ladder section to the base ladder using a 2-inch nylon strap. The fiberglass ladder was placed against the chimney. The decedent's coworker was holding the base ladder. Witness statements place the decedent approximately half-way up the fiberglass ladder when the fiberglass ladder shifted and the tether gave way. The decedent, who was not wearing fall protection equipment, fell to his left and slid down the roof. Both the decedent and fiberglass ladder fell approximately 49 feet to the brick pavers below. The decedent sustained fatal traumatic head and chest injuries.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division issued the following 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 are performing carpentry and roofing work.

**SERIOUS: FIXED AND PORTABLE LADDERS, PART 11, RULE 1124(12):**

Two portable ladders shall not be spliced together to provide long sections unless such ladders are specifically designed for such use.--

Two portable ladders, one a 20-foot fiberglass and a 40-foot aluminum ladder were spliced together using nylon straps to achieve the height needed to reach the work area. Employees are performing carpentry and roofing work.

**SERIOUS: RECORDING AND REPORTING OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND ILLNESSES, PART 11, RULE 1139(1):**

An oral report of a work-related incident resulting in a fatality or the inpatient hospitalization of three or more employees was not made within eight hours after the occurrence to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, State Secondary Complex, 7150 Harris Drive, P.O. Box 30644, Lansing, Michigan 48909, phone 1-800-858-0397.

Employees are performing carpentry and roofing work.

**SERIOUS: FALL PROTECTION, PART 45, RULE 4502, REF OSHA 1926.501(b)(13):**

Each employee engaged in residential construction activities 6 feet (1.8m) or more above lower levels shall be protected by guardrail systems, safety net systems, or personal fall arrest systems unless another provision in paragraph (b) of this section provides for an alternative fall protection measure. Exception: When the employer can demonstrate that it is infeasible or creates a greater hazard to use these systems, the employer shall develop and implement a fall protection plan which meets the requirements of paragraph (k) of 1926.502.

Note: There is a presumption that it is feasible and will not create a greater hazard to implement at least one of the above-listed fall protection systems. Accordingly, the employer has the burden of establishing that it is appropriate to implement a fall protection plan which complies with 1926.503(k) for a particular workplace situation, in lieu of implementing any of those systems.--

An employee working on a 16/12 pitch roof was not wearing any fall protection. Distance from work area to the ground below is approximately 49.5 feet. Employees are performing carpentry and roofing work.