

Case 299. 67-year-old master plumber died when he fell from a 6-foot stepladder while prepping the second floor ceiling area for the installation of a water line.

A 67-year-old male master plumber and sole owner of a plumbing firm died when he fell from a 6-foot stepladder while prepping the second floor ceiling area for the installation of a water line in a condominium under construction. It was the decedent's second day on the site. The incident was un-witnessed. The decedent was using a Milwaukee Hole Hog, heavy duty ½-inch drive drill. It appears that the decedent was drilling a hole through a piece of 2-x6-inch lumber when it appears that the bit possibly got bound/snagged on a metal identification plate that was located on the opposite side of the lumber where the decedent was drilling. When the drill bit hit a metal joist hanger, the torque of the drill housing kicked and was a possible factor in throwing the decedent from/off the ladder. Another contractor employee, who was on the site/project, found the decedent lying on his side. After speaking with him, the contractor found his co-worker and both returned to the incident scene, rendered aid and called for emergency response. The decedent was transported to a local hospital where he was declared deceased.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division issued a Safety and Health Recommendation to the decedent's spouse. MIOSHA recommended that if the firm continues to exist as a corporation, the company must develop and implement an accident prevention program with its employees. The accident prevention program at a minimum must address instruction for the set-up and use of ladders and power tools.