

Case 300. 50-year-old roofer was fatally electrocuted when the 40-foot aluminum extension ladder he and a coworker were extending contacted a 7,600-volt overhead power line.

A 50-year-old male roofer was fatally electrocuted when the 40-foot aluminum extension ladder he and a coworker were extending contacted a 7,600-volt overhead power line. The decedent and his coworker were present at the site to install metal flashing on a two-story brick building. The building was situated on the corner of an intersection. On the south side of the building was the driveway leading to the fire station. On the north side of the building was a roadway and on the west side of the building was an open space. When the employees arrived they parked the vehicle on the east side of the building, between the building and the roadway. Eight feet away from the building were 7,600-volt overhead power lines running in a north-south direction. Prior to the incident, the general contractor arranged with the electricity supplier to reroute the power lines and to have them blanketed/sleeved. Additionally, the general contractor provided a man lift for workers to use to access the roof. The decedent's employer could not accommodate the time schedule for work. The lift remained at the site for 1½-2 weeks to accommodate the decedent's employer's work schedule, but when the decedent's employer did not begin work, the general contractor removed the man lift. The electrocution occurred as the decedent and his coworker were in the process of extending the ladder to place it against the east wall of the building to reach the roof. They lost control of the ladder and it tilted back contacting the overhead power line. Both individuals received an electrical shock. The decedent had been holding the ladder with both hands and his coworker was holding the ladder with one hand. The electrocution hazard of the overhead power lines had previously been discussed with the decedent. A passerby witnessed the incident and called for emergency response. Emergency response rendered aid and transported the decedent to a local hospital where he was declared dead.

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.

Instance A: The company accident prevention program was not being maintained. A safety coordinator was not listed. Employee signatures were not provided after reading and training on the accident prevention program.

Instance B: The accident prevention program was not coordinated with employees. Chapter 17 LADDERS USE: ladders with conductive side rails are not to be used around electrical wires.

Instance C: Instruction was not given to each employee in the recognition and avoidance of hazards and the regulations applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate any hazards.

Employees exposed to electrocution hazards while engaged in roofing activities.

SERIOUS: FIXED AND PORTABLE LADDERS, PART 11

- RULE 1112(1):

A training program was not provided for each employee who used a ladder. The program did not enable each employee to recognize hazards related to the ladder and did not train each employee in the procedures to be followed to minimize these hazards.

Employees exposed to electrocution/shock hazards while performing roofing activities. The aluminum extension ladder came into contact with 7600 volt overhead power lines in the process of setting up the ladder.

- RULE 1124(7):

A metal ladder was used or moved within the minimum of 20 feet between power transmission or distribution lines.

Employees exposed to electrocution/shock hazards while performing roofing activities. The aluminum extension ladder came into contact with 7600 volt overhead power lines in the process of setting up the ladder.