

**Case 358. 61-year-old tree service owner died when he was thrown from the bucket of a cherry picker.**

A 61-year-old tree service owner died when he was thrown from the bucket of a cherry picker. The decedent and a family arrived at the site to cut down trees so the land could be prepped with a bulldozer for a new home. The decedent operated the aerial lift and the family member helped to drive vehicles to jobsites and to place brush into the limb chipper. The decedent was using a chain saw to cut two marked trees while elevated approximately 45-50 feet in the air. The truck was positioned on one side of some primary electrical lines. The articulated boomed elevated bucket was positioned on the other side of the electrical lines to cut the marked trees. It appears the knuckle of the boom caught on a tree near his truck. Apparently, he did not know the knuckle was stuck and he continued to apply pressure to try to move the bucket. When the knuckle slipped off the tree, the boom swayed back and forth, causing the decedent to be thrown out of the bucket. There were scar marks on the tree he was trimming, possibly from the bucket itself, and that is approximately 45 feet in the air. In the metal box on the platform, the responding police department found a safety belt. In the cab of the vehicle, the police found a hard hat. His coworker contacted a nearby business who called for emergency response. He was declared dead at the scene.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division did not issue a citation to the employer. The decedent was the owner of the firm with no employees. The business closed with his death.