

Case 366. 51-year-old roofer died when he fell 17-20 feet when walking down a purlin to obtain a piece of insulation during the construction of a pole barn.

A 51-year-old roofer died when he fell 17-20 feet when walking down a purlin to obtain a piece of roof sheeting during the construction of a pole barn. It was the decedent's first day on the job. The decedent and his three coworkers had been assigned to install 4-foot by 8-foot pieces of ½-inch insulation and then cover the insulation with roof steel. The work crew had installed approximately 7 pieces of insulation and 4 sheets of steel. At the time of the incident, two coworkers were walking down the screwed down roof steel to get the next sheet of steel from the ground person. The ground person had walked down the purlins and was in a rough terrain forklift truck with an attached scaffold platform, getting ready to hand up the next sheet of steel. The decedent was walking down the purlins to assist placement of the next sheet of steel when he stepped onto the foam insulation. He fell through the insulation onto the concrete surface. His coworkers called for emergency response. Several workers attended the decedent while one coworker went to the road to direct emergency responders.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citations to the employer at the conclusion of its investigation.

SERIOUS: GENERAL RULES, CS PART 1, RULE 408340114(1):

An employer shall develop, maintain, and coordinate with employees an accident prevention program, a copy of which shall be available at the worksite.

An accident prevention program was not developed, maintained, or coordinated with employees at the job site. Employees were exposed to the hazards on the job site while performing roofing/framing activities.

SERIOUS: FALL PROTECTION, REF 408.44502, CS PART 45

- **RULE 1926.501(b) (10):**

Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b) of this section, each employee engaged in roofing activities on low-slope roofs, with unprotected sides and edges 6 feet (1.8 m) or more above lower levels, shall be protected from falling by guardrail systems, safety net systems, personal fall arrest systems, or a combination of warning line system and guardrail system, warning line system and safety net system; or warning line system and personal fall arrest systems; or warning line system and safety monitoring system. Or, on roofs 50 feet (15.25 m) or less in width (see Appendix A to subpart M of this part), the use of a safety monitoring system alone [i.e. without the warning line system] is permitted.

Employees exposed to fall hazards while performing roofing work on a 4 in 12 pitch roof. Work includes installing 4 ft. by 8 ft. by ½ in. sheets of foam insulation and metal roofing materials. Fall protection is up to approximately 30 feet at the peak.

- RULE 1926.503(a) (1):

The employer shall provide a training program for each employee who might be exposed to fall hazards. The program shall enable each employee to recognize the hazards of falling and shall train each employee in the procedures to be followed in order to minimize these hazards.

Employees who are exposed to fall hazards have no training to minimize those hazards. Employees doing framing, truss setting, bracing, and roofing work are exposed to falls of up to approximately 30 feet.