

Case 372. 42-year-old laborer/floor technician for a social service organization died when he fell from a backing supply truck.

A 42-year-old laborer/floor technician for a social service organization died when he fell from a backing supply truck. The driver of the incident truck had returned from picking up donations. He positioned the truck and he and a coworker unloaded some of the donated articles. The remainder of the articles had to be unloaded into the stationary trailer. Due to other vehicles between the truck and the trailer, the driver straightened up the truck while the decedent was riding on the back bumper of the truck using the hold bar to maintain his balance. The back bumper was snow covered. The truck driver could see the decedent's head and arm. The decedent motioned the driver to back up the truck. The driver backed up the truck and the decedent motioned the driver to stop. The driver stopped the truck and put it in park and turned off the ignition. After exiting the truck, the driver noticed that the decedent was injured. Emergency response was called and the decedent was transported to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead. The medical examiner report indicated that the decedent fell from the truck and sustained a head injury.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued one Serious citation at the conclusion of its investigation.

SERIOUS: MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT, ACT 154, P.A. 174, AS AMENDED, SECTION 11(a):

The employer did not furnish to each employee, employment and a place of employment, which was free from recognized hazards that were causing or were likely to cause death or serious physical harm to the employee:

(The employer did not protect its employees from the hazard of slipping and falling from a supply truck by not prohibiting employees riding on the back bumper while assisting the driver in parking the vehicle, 2007 Chevrolet supply truck – Parking Lot).

Among others, one feasible and acceptable method to correct this violation is to prohibit employees from sitting or standing on any portion of the vehicle not designated for passenger or driver while the vehicle is in motion.