

Roofer Falls 20 Feet to His Death

SUMMARY:

A 46 year-old male roofer died as a result of injuries sustained from a 20 foot fall while installing shingles on a new home. He was not wearing any fall protection.

The Nebraska Department of Labor investigator concluded that to prevent future similar occurrences, employers and employees should:

- **Ensure that appropriate fall protection is available and used when workers may be exposed to a fall hazard.**
- **Monitor employees and co-workers for impaired behavior.**
- **Consider installing fall protection attach points into a home during construction.**

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE:

The goal of the workplace investigation is to prevent work-related deaths or injuries in the future by a study of the working environment, the worker, the task the worker was performing, the tools the worker was using, and the role of management in controlling how these factors interact.

This report is generated and distributed **solely** for the purpose of providing current, relevant education to the community on methods to prevent occupational fatalities and injuries.

INTRODUCTION:

On January 9, 1995, a 46 year-old male roofer died from injuries sustained when he fell 22 feet from a roof on which he was installing shingles. The Nebraska Department of Labor heard about this fatality on the radio the morning of January 10, 1995. The Nebraska FACE investigator went to the incident site on the morning of January 10, 1995. There was no one present at the site when he arrived but he was later met by an OSHA inspector. The victim was an independent contractor and was working for a roofing subcontractor who was working for a homebuilder.

INVESTIGATION:

The victim had been working approximately six hours at the time of the incident at 1:30. He had had a lunch break and returned to the roof around 1:00 according to another individual on site at the time of the incident. A survey of the site revealed the victim had shingled a small section of the corner of the roof at the rear of the house. The pneumatic nail gun he was using was still on the roof at the point where he apparently fell from as evidenced by the imprint in the snow on the ground below. The slope of the roof was approximately 3 inches in 5 inches.

There was no indication that any fall protection was in use or available. Toe boards had been installed around the perimeter of the roof. While the investigator was at the site, a bricklayer, who was at the house at the time of the incident came by. He confirmed that no fall protection was being used. He also said it was extremely cold to be doing roofing work on the day of the incident. The temperature at the time was 24 degrees F. with winds of 20 mph for a wind chill factor of

CAUSE OF DEATH:

The cause of death, as stated on the death certificate,

RECOMMENDATIONS/DISCUSSION:

Recommendation #1: Ensure that appropriate fall protection is available and used when workers may be exposed to a fall hazard.

Discussion:

Recommendation #2: Monitor employees and co-workers for impaired behavior.

Discussion:

Recommendation #3: Consider installing fall protection attach points into a home during construction.

Discussion:

Recommendation #4: Publicize the incident to stress importance of always following prescribed procedures.

Discussion:
