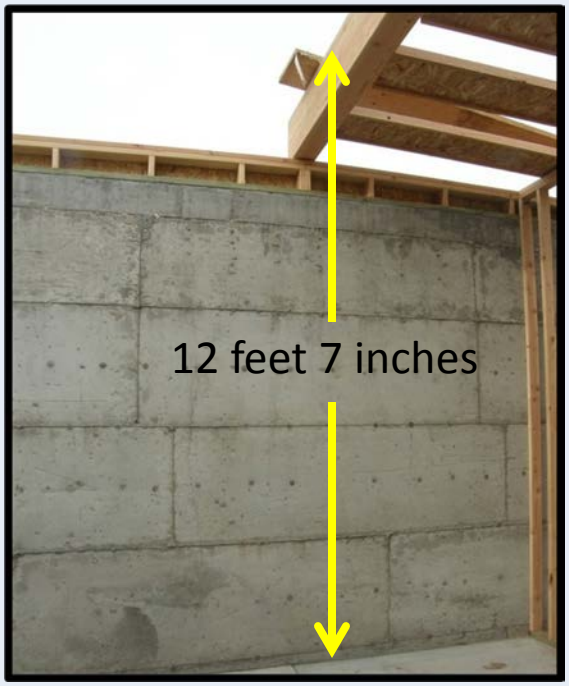
FACE/WA
Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation

FATALITY NARRATIVE

Carpenter Falls from Beam while Setting Rim Joist

Industry: New single-family housing construction
Task: Preparing to install a rim joist
Occupation: Carpenter/Foreman
Type of Incident: Fall



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On January 5, 2012, a 52-year-old carpenter/foreman was fatally injured when he fell from a beam. The victim had been employed for 14 years by a small general contractor who primarily did residential work, but also did commercial and industrial jobs. On the day of the incident, the victim and a laborer were at a job site, where they had worked for the past month, adding an addition to a commercial building. They used a ladder to access the top plate of the unfinished single-story structure where they intended to place a rim joist. They had previously been working from ladders and, according to the laborer, intended to return to working from the ladders once they placed the rim joist. Fall protection gear was available on-site, but they did not use it. As they were moving the rim joist into place, the laborer was standing on the top plate and the victim was standing on 6½-inch-wide beam, when the victim fell 12 feet 7 inches to a concrete surface. The laborer called emergency services, who transported the victim to a hospital, where he died of head injuries two weeks later.

The carpenter fell from the location on the beam indicated by the arrow.

External view of building addition under construction where the carpenter fell.

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The victim was standing on the beam attempting to place the rim joist when he fell.

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FALL PROTECTION WORK PLAN (FPWP)

Company Name _____ Date _____
Site Address _____
(If additional space is needed, use the back of this sheet)
Identify all fall hazards 10' or more above the ground or lower level (check all that apply)
__ Open-sided walking/working surfaces (i.e. roofs, open-sided floors)
__ Open-sided ramps, runways, platforms
__ Floor openings
__ Wall openings
__ Skylight openings
__ Trenches
__ Surfaces that do not meet the definition of a walking/working surface (i.e. top plate)

Excerpt of first few lines of a sample Fall Protection Work Plan*

Requirements

The employer must:

- Ensure that the appropriate fall protection system is provided, installed, and implemented according to the requirements in Chapter 296-155 WAC, Part C-1 Fall Protection Requirements for Construction when employees are exposed to fall hazards of four feet or more and working on any surface that does not meet the definition of a walking/working surface not already covered in WAC 296-155-24609. See WAC 296-155-24611(1)(c).
- Develop and implement a written fall protection work plan including each area of the work place where the employees are assigned and where hazards of ten feet or more exist. See WAC 296-155-24611(2)(a).
- Train employees in the requirements of the fall protection work plan. See WAC 296-155-24611(2)(b).

*For samples of Fall Protection Work Plans (FPWP), go to the Washington State L&I web site
www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Basics/Programs/FallProtectionConstruction/default.asp

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Recommendations

- Conduct a daily pre-task job hazard analysis to identify potential fall hazards so that work can be completed safely.
- When installing joists consider minimizing fall hazards by using methods such as a mobile scaffold, wall bracket scaffold, or catch platform.

Mobile scaffold

Wall bracket scaffold

Statewide Statistics: This was number 2 of 60 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2012, and was number 1 of 8 construction-related fatalities.

This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.

Developed by WA State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277.

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