

Case 415. 48-year-old roofer died from a 17-foot 6 inch fall from the edge of a 100-foot by 48-foot low-slope roof.

A 48-year-old male roofer died from a 17-foot 6 inch fall from the edge of a 100-foot by 48-foot low-slope roof. The decedent was the project foreman. The guardrails and base plates that had been used during part of the construction project had been taken down and placed in the work truck. A warning line was present, but no employee was assigned as a safety monitor. In the area of the incident, the insulation board was running at an angle to the roof edge; a saddle/taper from 3-feet to ½-inch was being constructed to funnel water from the roof. A coworker, who was installing insulation screws, witnessed the incident. The decedent was using a battery-powered reciprocating saw to cut insulation board at the edge of the roof outside of the warning line with no other means of fall protection (personal fall arrest system, safety monitor). It appeared that the decedent either stepped backwards or to the side and fell from the roof. It is unclear if the decedent struck other equipment prior to striking cobblestones on the ground. Emergency response was called and the decedent was transported to the hospital where he died later that day. Unconfirmed reports indicated the decedent had felt dizzy that day. The heat index at the time of the incident was approximately 87° F. Subsequent investigation noted a roof anchor installed approximately 25 feet from the incident site and that a harness was available on site.

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

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 system, 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.

No fall protection measures used for employee installing roofing material at *incident site*. Employee exposed to approximately 17 foot 6 inch fall to ground. *MIFACE removed the incident location.*