

CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

Construction Safety Investigator

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Instructions

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

Case Day:

Spring 2007

Accident Type:

Scaffold Accident - Homemade Platform

Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29 CFR 1926.451(f)(7), 1926.552(b)(1)(ii), 1926.602(d), 29CFR 1910.178(l)

Case:

A 32-year-old carpenter died when he fell from a homemade platform (extended approximately seven feet in the air) after it detached from a forklift.

Accident Detail:

The decedent and two other carpenters were framing a wall at the rear corner of a new construction, single-family residence located on a hillside that was rough and steep.

To reach the area, the carpenters decided to use a homemade platform as a makeshift scaffold. A fourth worker operated a rough-terrain forklift and elevated the platform, which was unsecured, approximately seven feet up in the air, with the three carpenters holding the wall to be framed. The platform fell off the forks.

Two of the carpenters fell off the platform, which fell on the edge of the foundation above the men's heads. The decedent fell off the left end of the platform, which struck him in the head.

Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?

Accident Scene Conclusion:

The investigation revealed that the carpenters typically would use ladders to reach the area to be framed.

Because the terrain was rough and steep, and the work area was higher than the ladders could reach, it was decided to use a homemade platform to perform the task. The platform was constructed of wood and had railings on three sides with cleats on the bottom of the long side. The cleats had been inserted on the railing side for stability when lifted.

The operator of the forklift had inserted the forks under the long side of the platform without the cleats. This caused the platform to rest on top of the forks and be more unstable. The platform was not secured to the forklift.

Preventive Safety Measures Include:

- Companies should not attempt to build any "homemade" personnel platform for a forklift; all personnel platforms must comply with ANSI / ASME standards and the OSHA regulations.
- Those who use a personnel platform on a rough terrain forklift must use approved fall protection equipment.
- Scaffolding should be used in difficult-to-reach framing locations.
- Personnel should not be transported by material hoists.
- Forklift operators should be trained by a competent person to operate forklifts correctly and safely.

Attendance Roster

Reference: This case was reported in the NIOSH Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Report #07KY008.

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