

Siding Installer Falls 23 Feet from Pump Jack Scaffold

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #: 71-227-2022s

REPORT DATE: September 19, 2022

INCIDENT DATE: July 21, 2020

VICTIM: 38 years old

INDUSTRY: Residential remodelers

OCCUPATION: Siding installer

SCENE: Apartment building under construction

EVENT TYPE: Fall



A 38-year-old siding installer died when he fell 23 feet from a pump jack scaffold.

The siding installer, who owned his own construction company, was working for a subcontractor to install siding at a new construction apartment complex.

On the day of the incident, the installer accessed the scaffold platform at the building's third floor level by climbing an extension ladder. The scaffold was not equipped with a guardrail system; it only had a workbench, which alone does not meet the requirement of a guardrail system.

The installer provided his own full body harness, but he was not wearing it. The subcontractor provided the pump jack scaffolds and the rest of the personal fall arrest system consisting of a vertical rope lifeline with a rope grab and connector. The subcontractor required that site workers use the personal fall arrest system.

As the installer was working from the scaffold platform, he fell 23 feet, landing on a pile of construction materials on the ground. He died of multiple blunt force injuries due to the fall.

Investigators found:

All employees had received fall protection training. The site superintendent reported that he held weekly site-wide safety meetings, which included an emphasis on the requirement for workers to use personal fall arrest systems. In addition, he did safety walk-arounds once or twice per day to ensure workers were using fall protection. On the day of the fatal incident, he had not yet done a walk-around inspection.

FATALITY NARRATIVE



Photo 1. Unguarded pump jack scaffold from which the installer fell 23 feet.



Photo 2. Rope grab lifeline (in red) with connector (in yellow) that worker did not use, as he was not wearing his full body harness. The scaffold walkway and workbench are visible in the top center of the photo.



Photo 3. Location where the installer landed after falling 23 feet. His full body harness was in the background (circled).



Photo 4. Installer's full body harness.

FATALITY NARRATIVE



Illustration 1. Pump jack scaffold with workbench and guardrail. Courtesy of The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Requirements

Employers must:

- Protect each employee on a scaffold from falling ten feet or more to a lower level, by providing either:
 - (a) A personal fall arrest system; or
 - (b) Guardrails.

For additional requirements, see Safety Standards for Fall Protection, Scaffolds [WAC 296-880-30030](#)

- Make sure guardrails are installed along all open sides and ends of platforms. See [WAC 296-874-20064](#)

Requirements

Employers must:

- Develop and implement a written fall protection work plan including each area of the work place where the employees are assigned and where fall hazards of ten feet or more exist.

See [WAC 296-880-10020](#)

(Note: A fall protection work plan is not required where a guardrail system eliminates the fall hazard.)

Recommendations

General contractors and sub-contractors should:

- Use guardrails on scaffolds whenever practical instead of or in addition to personal fall protection.
- Emphasize the requirement that workers maintain 100% tie off. This should be written in the work contract.
- Inspect scaffold operations at the start of each day before work begins and periodically throughout the day to ensure workers use fall protection.

Resources

[An Overview of Supported Scaffold Safety](#)

This narrative was developed to alert employers and workers of a tragic incident 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.

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