

WHAT HAPPENED?



The green arrow shows the correct installation of a chain mount box. The blue arrow shows the chain mount box that failed (it was installed upside down.)

A cell tower worker fell to his death.

A cell tower worker was killed when the antenna mount chain his fall protection was attached to dislodged, causing him to fall 93 feet to the ground below.

The worker's job task was to replace a radio unit that had failed. He was wearing fall protection that was attached to the antenna mount chain using his lanyard snap hook.

The worker was unaware that the antenna mount had been improperly installed, making it unsafe to anchor his fall protection to the antenna mount chain.

When he was repositioning himself around the mount and antenna in order to reach the radio unit, the chain fell out of the slot of the mount causing the antenna to shift outward.

The outward shift of the antenna caused the worker to fall backwards. As he fell, tension was applied on the chain, which then unraveled from around the tower, allowing the snap hook to slide down the chain and causing him to fall 93 feet to his death.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT A SIMILAR FATALITY FROM HAPPENING AT YOUR WORKPLACE?

Take these steps to help ensure a safe working environment

- Conduct a pre-plan climb and inspection that is done by a competent person onsite. The competent person should ensure all attachment points are stable and secured.
- Use other alternative means of safe access to work areas, such as aerial lifts or elevated work platforms.
- Provide workers with training on fall protection plan policies and approved tie off points on cellular towers.



RELATED ONLINE RESOURCES

Communication Tower Safety Information:

<https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-topics/industry/communication-towers>
<https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-topics/industry/communication-towers>

Need more information?

Go to <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/preventing-injuries-illnesses/get-started-with-safety-health/> for information on workplace safety and health, rules and policies, sample programs and general assistance.

Call 1-800-423-7233 to contact the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I), Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).

Interested in a free safety and health consultation at your workplace?

The Department of Labor & Industries provides consultations, training, and technical assistance at no cost to employers. Call today to schedule a free confidential consultation or go to <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/preventing-injuries-illnesses/request-consultation/> for more information. You may also call 1-800-423-7233 or visit a local L&I office and ask for the Consultation Manager.

How does an employee file a complaint?

Employees or employee representatives may file formal complaints with DOSH when they believe a safety or health hazard exists in their workplace.

Complaint forms are available from a local L&I office in both English and Spanish, or on the Web at <https://lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/workplace-complaints/safety-complaints>.



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This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees of a tragic loss of life. The information in this bulletin is based on preliminary data and does NOT represent final determinations of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.