



# 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

**Incident Date:** January 5, 2012  
**Release Date:** June 24, 2013  
**SHARP Report No.:** 71-121-2013  
**Case No.:** 12WA003

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



### 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).

### 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.

**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.*

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