

A 58-year-old male employee fell through a skylight approximately 37 feet to the concrete ground below and was fatally injured. The victim was the General Manager of the site. The incident occurred in the Soule Shop building that was approximately 13,500 square feet and contained skylights on the roof that were approximately 9 feet long and 3 feet wide. The shop was used to maintain rail cars.

On the day of the incident, the victim was attempting to fix leaks in the roof of the shop. An employee stated that he received a call from the victim asking him to run the aerial lift while he (the victim) fixed the roof. The employee drove the aerial lift to the north side of the shop and elevated the lift to access the roof. The employee stated that he stayed in the basket of the aerial lift while the victim was on the roof. The victim caulked the edge of the roof from the center point to the east side. This took him approximately 30 minutes. The employee in the basket stated that the victim mentioned since he was already up on the roof, he was going to walk around to see if there were any other holes. The victim found an additional hole south of where he was originally caulking. The victim started walking forward toward the aerial lift basket, located on the north side of the building, to retrieve more caulk. The employee in the basket stated he was reaching down to get the caulk out of the tool bag and when he looked up, he saw the victim in the skylight up to his chest trying to grab something to hold onto. The victim then fell all the way through the northeastern most skylight approximately 37 feet to the concrete ground below.

Another employee stated that he saw the employee in the aerial lift basket and the victim on the roof as he entered the shop. The employee went to the break room and as he was coming out of the break room, he saw the victim's feet hanging from the skylight and then fall. Neither the employee (aerial lift operator) nor the victim had fall protection on at any point during this job. When asked, the employees stated that there were no anchor points on the roof that could have been used. There were multiple fall protection harnesses and lanyards observed on site.

In conclusion, the victim was trying to repair the roof because it was leaking. The victim did not have fall protection on, and the skylights on the roof were not guarded. The victim fell through the northeastern most skylight approximately 37 feet and sustained fatal injuries on site. The employer did not ensure that employees were protected while operating an aerial lift, working at heights six feet or greater, and that the skylights were properly guarded/covered.

Citation(s) as Originally Issued

A complete inspection was conducted at the accident scene. Some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality.

Citation 1 Item 1 Type: Serious Proposed Penalty: \$1,200

29 CFR 1926.453(b)(2)(v): A body belt was not worn and/or a lanyard was not attached to the boom or basket when working from an aerial lift: Note: As of January 1, 1998, subpart M of this part (1926.502(d)) provides that body belts are not acceptable as part of a personal fall arrest system. The use of a body belt in a tethering system or in a restraint system is acceptable and is regulated.

In that two employees did not wear fall protection while ascending in a Snorkel TB-A42RDZ aerial lift to access the roof, exposing the employees to an ejection hazard, and falling approximately 37 feet to the concrete/gravel ground below.

Citation 1 Item 2 Type: Serious Proposed Penalty: \$5,400

29 CFR 1926.501(b)(1): Each employee on a walking/working surface with an unprotected side or edge which was 6 feet (1.8 m) or more above a lower level was not protected from falling using guardrail systems, safety net systems, or personal fall arrest systems.

In that an employee was working from an approximate 37-foot-high roof fixing roof leaks without fall protection that resulted in a fatality.

Citation 1 Item 3 Type: Serious Proposed Penalty: \$5400

29 CFR 1926.501(b)(4)(i): Each employee on walking/working surfaces was not protected from falling through holes (including skylights), more than six feet (1.8 m) above lower levels, by personal fall arrest systems, covers, or guardrail systems erected around such holes.

In that the fiberglass skylights on the roof were not guarded before an employee fixed the roof leaks, exposing an employee to an approximate 37-foot fall hazard that resulted in a fatality.

Fall through skylight —Insp # 1641715 Tennessee Valley Railroad



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