

7 Fall through wall opening – Inspection #1137371

A **50 year old male** employee was fatally injured when he fell approximately 21 feet through a wall opening to the concrete slab below. On the day of the incident, the victim was installing pre-fabricated interior wall panels in a three story wood frame apartment building. At the time of the inspection all floor and wall openings, including window and apartment door openings, were provided with guardrail systems. The top rails were measured at approximately 43 inches from the upper edge to the floor level, and the mid-rails measured at approximately 22 inches to the upper rails from the floor level. Since there were no witnesses, the condition of the guardrails at the time of the incident and the specific causes of the fall could not be definitively determined.

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 1a

29 CFR 1926.34(a)	“General.” In every building or structure exits were not so arranged and maintained as to provide free and unobstructed egress from all parts of the building or structure at all times when it was occupied. No lock or fastening to prevent free escape from the inside of any building shall be installed except in mental, penal, or corrective institutions where supervisory personnel is continually on duty and effective provisions are made to remove occupants in case of fire or other emergency. In that a 3 rd floor of an apartment building under construction was not arranged and maintained so that employees were provided free and unobstructed egress from the building. Employees were not provided a ladder, stairway, or other means of unobstructed egress and were only able to get down from the 3 rd floor on a work platform attached to the telescopic handler forklift truck.
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Citation 1 Item 1b

29 CFR 1926.1051(a)	A stairway or ladder was not provided at all personnel points of access where there is a break in elevation of 19 inches or more, and no ramp, runway, sloped embankment, or personnel hoist is provided. In that a stairway or ladder was not provided for employees working on the 3 rd floor of an apartment building under construction. The 3 rd floor location was approximately 21 feet above the ground level.
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Citation 1 Item 2

29 CFR 1926.451(c)(3)(iv)	Front-end loaders and similar pieces of equipment were used to support scaffold platforms that were not specifically designed by the manufacturer for such use. In that the employer did not ensure that the Gehl manufactured, model DL11-55 telescopic handler forklift truck used to lift a work platform with employees up to a 3 rd floor elevation was approved for such use. A manufacturer’s warning label affixed to the operator’s control area states “FALL HAZARD DO NOT use this machine to lift people or work platforms”.
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Photo 1 of 1 – A framing employee fell approximately 21 feet from a third floor door opening indicated by the red arrow.