

A 66 year old male employee fell 32' from the rafters of the Gatlinburg Convention Center while he was installing rigging to raise motors that raise sound and light equipment.

PDH Systems Incorporated was hired as the overall Production Manager for the events. One of the requirements by the Convention Center is that the employees hired are part of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 197. This employer was hired to provide union workers and a supervisor to complete the equipment setup for the event.

The Lead Rigger arrived on site along with the work crew, which consisted of 7 employees including the victim. He received the rigging plan from the Production Manager and at this time he made marks on the floor that corresponded to the location of equipment motors that would be raised into the rafters. On the day of the accident the victim and three others were performing duties as up riggers and would be ascending into the rafters to place the motors. The victim and one other used the JLG Lift to access the rafters.

Once they were in the rafters, they traversed approximately 30 feet through the rafters to the connection locations. The victim made his initial connection and moved to the location of his second. The Convention Center does not have a horizontal lifeline installed and requires employees to use double lanyards to remain 100% tied off while working in the rafters. On the day of the accident, employees working in the rafters did not have on double lanyards. The second location where the victim moved to is where he fell from the rafters striking the concrete ground 32 feet below.

It was determined that there was no fall protection training conducted and no personal fall arrest system was in place. Training records and interviews indicated that none of the employees had received training to recognize the hazards of falling and the procedures to be followed to minimize these hazards. The employees also did not have training on selection of personal fall protection equipment. Interviewed employees stated that each person bought their own equipment based on comfort and price. Most employees in the union and onsite the day of the accident wear climbing harnesses and single lanyards as their fall protection.

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 of Violation: Serious

\$1400

29 CFR 1910.30(a)(1): The employer did not provide training for each employee who uses personal fall protection systems or who is required to be trained as specified elsewhere in this subpart before any employee is exposed to a fall hazard.

In that four employees were exposed to fall hazards while required to work from elevated levels and had not been trained on the use of personal fall protection systems.

Citation 1 Item 2

Type of Violation: Serious

\$4000

29 CFR 1910.67(c)(2)(v): A personal fall arrest or travel restraint system that meets the requirements in subpart I of this part was not worn and attached to the boom or basket when working from an aerial lift.

In that two employees were operating a JLG Lift Model E300AJP (SN:0300275499) to access the rafters 32 feet above the ground and did not use a personal fall arrest or travel restraint system.

Citation 1 Item 3

Type of Violation: Serious

\$1600

29 CFR 1910.132(b): Employee-owned equipment: Where employees provide their own protective equipment, the employer did not assure its adequacy, including proper maintenance, and sanitation of such equipment.

In that the employer permitted employees to use climbing belts and single lanyards hooked back onto the lanyard as a personal fall arrest system while working in the rafters 32 feet above the ground.

Citation 1 Item 4

Type of Violation: Serious

\$1200

29 CFR 1910.140(c)(10)(i): The employer did not ensure that fall protection system snap hooks and carabiners are not connected directly to webbing, rope, or wire rope unless they are designed for such connections.

In that employees were wrapping the lanyard around a beam and connecting the snap hook of the lanyard back onto itself.







44 Fall from rafters—Insp # 1718518 Appalachian Staffing Service, LLC



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