

## **TOOLBOX TALK #40**

### **CARPENTER DIES AFTER FALL FROM LADDER**



A 52-year-old finish carpenter with 20 years of experience and a co-worker were at a newly erected commercial building to install plywood panels on the ceiling. Their employer had no formal safety program. The rafters in which the plywood panels were to be secured measured 11'- 6" from the concrete floor below, requiring both men to work at height.

According to witnesses, several scissors' lifts were available for use; however, the victim opted to use a 6-foot fiberglass stepladder. Approximately 7 hours and 45 minutes after the workday began, the pair ascended their ladders to obtain measurements for the next panel. According to the co-worker, the victim was standing on the fourth rung from the bottom of the ladder. The victim was holding one end of a tape measure with his left hand and reaching beyond the ladder side rails to obtain the proper measurement.

While doing so, the co-worker stated, the ladder started leaning to the victim's left. The victim fell about 46 inches to the concrete, surface below, landing on his head and neck. The co-worker immediately started descending his ladder, moved the victim's ladder from its original position to access the victim and attempted to provide aid. The co-worker yelled for help, and a contractor who was nearby hurried over and called emergency medical services. While waiting for EMS to arrive, the co-worker repositioned the victim, who was unconscious, and elevated his head.

EMS arrived a short time later, rendered aid on site and then transported the victim to a hospital. The victim was later transported to a larger hospital but succumbed to his injuries three days later. Cause of death was listed as blunt force trauma.

#### ***To help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:***

- Implement a job hazard analysis process.
- Ensure employees use equipment that best reduces the risk of injury.
- Develop, implement and enforce a formal health and safety program that includes ladder safety.