



A DAY LABORER DIES WHEN HE FALLS FROM A SCAFFOLD

A 40-year-old Hispanic day laborer, Juan V.*, died when he fell from a scaffold. Juan was hired from a street corner to apply stone and stucco to the outside of a house. The victim rented, put together, and worked on the scaffold by himself. The homeowner did not know if Juan had any training in scaffold use. The scaffold was put together without guardrails and the walk board was not attached to the scaffold. There was nothing to prevent Juan from falling. As he reached for a cell phone, the walk board moved and Juan fell twelve feet to the ground.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

Juan may not have known how to safely use a scaffold.

The walk board shifted when Juan reached for a cell phone.

There was nothing to keep Juan from falling from the scaffold.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Employers (including homeowners) should make sure day laborers are trained in the safe use of scaffolds.

The scaffold should be properly erected and the walk board should be secured to the scaffold frame.

Employers should make sure day laborers use guardrails or personal fall protection when working on a scaffold.

References:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb/Documents/tailgate16-Scaffolds.pdf>
<http://www.elcosh.org/en/document/361/d000359/hazard-alert-scaffold-safety.html>

The California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program has been investigating work-related deaths since 1992. The goal of the FACE program is to prevent these deaths by informing workers and managers of worksite hazards and how to avoid them.

For a complete report of this (11CA002) or other cases, and information on the California FACE Program, contact:

California Department of Public Health
Occupational Health Branch (OHB), FACE Program
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, Third Floor, Richmond, CA 94804
OHB phone: (510) 620-5757
CA Relay Service: 711

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Visit our website at: www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/ohb-face

* Not the victim's real name

PLEASE POST

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FACE stands for "Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation." The purpose of the FACE program is to find problems that may cause work-related deaths so that employers and employees can help prevent them.

FACE is a public health program run by the California Department of Public Health, Occupational Health Branch, and funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

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