Fall Protection – Know the Gear Fatality File

Improper Fall Protection Gear Use Claims Life of Young Construction Worker

In November 2020, a 21-year-old scaffolding laborer tragically fell nearly 50 feet to his death while working on a building project in Brooklyn, New York. The worker was wearing a fall arrest harness, but it was not properly tethered to an anchor point at the time of the incident.

An OSHA investigation found that the employer, Everest Scaffolding Inc., had committed several safety violations. These included failing to provide feasible fall protection during scaffold erection, not inspecting the fall arrest system before use, and not ensuring the anchorage could support the required 5,000 pounds. Additionally, workers had not been properly trained on how to use the fall protection gear safely.

This incident underscores the importance of not just having the right fall protection equipment, but knowing how to use it correctly. Employers must train their workers thoroughly, inspect equipment regularly, and enforce safe practices at all heights. A harness alone cannot save a life if it is not used as intended.

Source: Hazwoper-Osha.com