Fall Protection – Landscaping Fatality File

Fatal Fall from Ladder During Landscaping Project

On October 5, 2023, a fatal accident occurred at a commercial landscaping site in Calgary, Alberta, involving a 34-year-old worker, Emily Thompson. Thompson was trimming branches from a tree using a ladder when she lost her balance and fell approximately 15 feet to the ground. Despite the rapid response of her coworkers and emergency medical services, Thompson succumbed to her injuries at the scene.

The investigation revealed that Thompson was not wearing any personal fall protection equipment at the time of the accident. The ladder was not properly secured, and no additional safety measures, such as harnesses or guardrails, were in place to prevent falls. These oversights were significant violations of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, which require fall protection for any work conducted at heights over six feet.

This incident prompted an urgent review of safety protocols within the company, leading to the implementation of comprehensive fall protection training for all employees, mandatory use of fall arrest systems, and regular safety audits to ensure compliance with federal safety standards. The company also committed to investing in better equipment and resources to prevent future tragedies.