Flat Roofing Safety Fatality File

Roofer Falls 18 Feet from Wet House Roof

A 50-year-old roofer died when he fell 18 feet from a house roof.

He had 20 years of experience as a roofer and had worked for his employer’s roofing company for two years.

He was part of a three-person crew installing a metal roof on a two-story house. Shortly after 8 a.m., the crew was setting up for the day. This was their third day at the work site. The company owner had not yet arrived.

A light rain was falling. The victim, wearing a harness, climbed up a ladder and went onto the steep slope 8/12 pitch roof. He walked horizontally along the roof for about 25 feet. No one else was on the roof.

The crew supervisor was below in the yard. After a few minutes, the supervisor called to the victim, but got no answer. He went looking for him and found him unconscious lying on a concrete patio. The other roofer stayed with the victim while the supervisor called 911. Emergency responders arrived after a few minutes. The victim died while being transported by ambulance.

The medical examiner gave the cause of death as “multiple blunt force injuries” resulting from a fall from the roof.

The state investigator found that the victim’s rope grab lifeline was attached to a roof anchor, but he was not tied off to it when he slid on the wet roof underlayment and fell off the roof edge.