Near-Misses Matter: Building a Culture That Reports and Learns Fatality File

Employee Sustains Back Injury When Ladder Slips and Falls

At approximately 3:24 p.m. on June 4, 2012, Employee #1 was working as a stockroom worker and sales associate for Burlington Coat Factory, in Daly City, CA. He was using a ladder in a stockroom. A coworker, who was also a sales associate, watched Employee #1 lean a stepladder up against stockroom shelving to gain access to boxes on the top shelf. Employee #1 was using the stepladder without opening up its legs or engaging its spreader braces or spreader bars. She saw him climb up the steps. The coworker then turned and walked a few steps before hearing a crash as the ladder fell. She saw the ladder on the floor and Employee #1 lying on top of the ladder. A second coworker, a stockroom worker, said he did not see Employee #1 set up the ladder or fall with it. He heard a crash and turned to find that the ladder had slid backward. It had landed with the steps facing up. Employee #1 was lying on his back on top of the ladder, with his feet toward the storage rack and his head near the bottom of the ladder. The two coworkers called for emergency assistance and attended to Employee #1, who lost consciousness. Employee #1 was taken by ambulance to San Francisco General Hospital on June 4, 2012. He was released on June 6, 2012. The narrative indicated that he had sustained a back injury, but it did not specify the nature of that injury. The receiving and stockroom supervisor and other store management were unaware of employee procedures involving use of the ladder prior to this incident. Interviews indicate there was no training provided on safe ladder use for employees who used ladders, and no documentation of such training was provided by the employer upon request. CITATIONS 1-1 GENERAL – T8 3276(e)(16)(C):

Failure to ensure the worker used the stepladder properly with the legs extended and braces 1-2 GENERAL – T8 3276(f): Failure to ensure ladder safety training per requirements of this section. 1-3 REGULATORY – T8 342(a): Failure to report accident involving hospitalization of worker for over 24 hrs. The accident was reported in a timely manner by the Daly City Fire Department. The employer failed to report the incident.

Source: https://www.osha.gov