

Volunteer Plunges to His Death

A volunteer died of head and chest injuries when he fell 18 feet to a concrete floor while helping repair a community sports facility.

People from various work backgrounds had volunteered their time and services to repair and insulate the building. The inexperienced group decided to use a farm tractor equipped with a hydraulically-operated front end loader attachment to raise workers and materials up from the floor.

The tractor with the loader belonged to another volunteer. Because of its flexibility, it was being used rather than conventional scaffolding. It was a common practice in this community to use this type of equipment to lift agricultural products and persons.

The victim and two others were being lifted to the ceiling along with some materials. When the loader bucket struck a ceiling support beam, all three fell to the floor. Two survived with serious injuries, but the third died a month later in the hospital.

Volunteer efforts like this project are greatly appreciated by the community. Unfortunately, volunteer workers often lack the training and proper machinery as well as the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which would be available for similar tasks in the paid workforce. Follow all the safety precautions on the weekend you would use during your work week.