Companies Cited For Guardrail Violations



In safety, what you don’t have can be equally as damning as what you do have. An Ontario wood floor manufacturer has been fined $80,000 for failure to ensure a guardrail was installed around a pit. The charge came after a worker fell about 5.5 feet (1.65 meters) into a pit and suffered several injuries, including a broken vertebra in his neck.

The victim was unloading dried lumber from a kiln when a hook slipped off of a kiln truck being used to move the lumber. The hook, part of a fiber sling and cable winch system, swung toward the worker and struck one or both legs, causing the worker to fall into the pit.

All Fair Investment and Enterprises Ltd., a Toronto-based company that operates Erie Flooring and Wood Products, must also pay a 25 percent victim fine surcharge in connection with the Aug. 17, 2005 incident in West Lorne, ON.

In an unrelated incident in Burlington, ON, a construction worker who was using fall protection equipment nevertheless fell 2.75 meters (nine feet) to a concrete floor deck and suffered a broken leg and dislocated ankle. A Ministry of Labour investigation determined that a fall arrest system used by the worker was not arranged in such a manner that would have prevented a fall to a lower level.

An inspector who was investigating the fall ordered that a guardrail system be installed in various locations around the 12-story building, but a subsequent visit a few weeks later found work continuing without any new guardrails in place.

High-View Structures Inc. and Baxter’s Wharf Inc. were each fined $75,000, plus 25 percent victim fine surcharges. They pleaded guilty to charges of failing to ensure that a fall arrest system was arranged so a worker could not hit the ground or a lower level, and for failing to follow an order to install guardrails.

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