Search Overlooks Watchman’s Body



A worker was killed when he fell down a large uncovered shaft in a shopping mall tower under construction.

He was a mechanical equipment maintenance person who worked for a large city shopping mall, and was responsible for checking areas and equipment on a certain schedule. He carried a portable radio so he was in constant contact with his supervisors. He went to work as usual in the evening. He was last seen just after midnight as he walked across the mall lobby. A few minutes later, he failed to respond to radio contact.

Part of the shopping mall complex was searched immediately. However, a tower under construction was not searched until the following evening. At that time, his body was found at the bottom of a large exhaust ventilation shaft. He had apparently been on the roof of a building tower under construction and had fallen into the unguarded shaft.

This worker took a chance by entering an unsafe area, a construction zone, which was not part of his regular duties. A more thorough search of the complex should have taken place immediately. He did not survive the fall, but in similar circumstances another person might if found and rescued soon enough. Don’t take chances by entering an unsafe, unfamiliar area. Know what to do in case of any emergency in your workplace, including a missing co-worker.