Three Buried in Concrete



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Menes Daniel, Torivio Acevedo and Endy Guirand were killed when a concrete form collapsed. The framework, used to shape wet concrete, burst and dropped the men through a high-rise roof to the floor below. It also covered them three feet (one meter) deep in quick-drying concrete.

Firefighters were forced to use axes and hammers to try to rescue the men. A fourth worker, Connelio Ruiz, was hospitalized but he recovered. The men had been working for a contractor at a Florida luxury condominium called One Bal Harbor.

At least two of the dead workers had been wearing safety harnesses, but the building director couldn't verify whether they had been fastened to the building or to the concrete form. The employer, Southland Forming, has received four OSHA citations since 1996 and had prior fatal incidents in 1995 and 1999.

It's not enough just to wear your safety harness right. You have to think about what it's attached to as well. Where will you wind up if the worst happens?

If you have contractors on the job, make sure you set the safety standard, and make sure it's followed. And if you work for a contractor, ask for a safety briefing when you arrive on site. It'll take a few minutes, but it might save your life.

Source: Miami Herald, November 7, 2006