

Florida Construction Fall Fatality Fact Sheet

The Florida Occupational Health and Safety Program

The Florida Occupational Health and Safety Program (OHSP) at the Florida Department of Health is focused on identifying and reducing the causes of work-related injuries, illnesses, and deaths. The goal of the program is to implement prevention practices that will improve the health and safety of Florida's workforce.

Website: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/occupational-health/>.

Fall Hazards

Construction workers build our bridges, houses, buildings, and labor on the upkeep of our state's physical structures. Like any industry requiring physical labor, construction sector employees are vulnerable to various occupational hazards. In Florida, the construction industry had the highest number of work-related fatalities between 2007 and 2011¹ compared to other industries. During that time, 747 construction workers were killed while working.

Falls are the leading cause of construction worker fatalities in Florida,¹ accounting for one-third of on-the-job deaths in the industry. To turn this problem around, fall prevention practices should be used by contractors and construction workers.

For a full report on work-related fatalities in Florida see the Work-related Fatality Report available at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/occupational-health/publications-page.html>.

Case Studies

These incidents represent a summary of selected fall fatalities across Florida in the construction industry from 2011 to 2013. More information can be found on the National Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction website at <http://stopconstructionfalls.com/>.

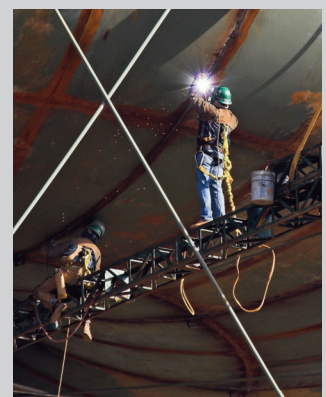
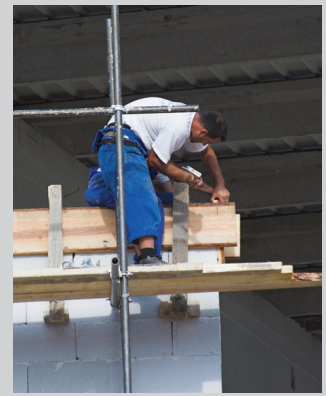
Case 1 (January 24, 2013; Horseshoe Beach, FL) - A laborer was working to sandblast and paint the top of the Horseshoe Beach water treatment facility's 135-foot high water tower when he sustained a fatal fall to the ground below.

Case 2 (March 25, 2013; Winter Haven, FL) - An employee fell from a roof while walking towards the ladder to descend. The employee landed on his head, was hospitalized and died two weeks later.

Case 3 (March 22, 2012; Panama City, FL) - An employee was contracted to repair recent fire damage at an incinerator facility. While installing scaffolding, he took a step backwards off the scaffold and fell 100 feet.

Case 4 (June 11, 2012; Tampa, FL) - While working on a roof, an employee fell through a 34-inch hole, covered with a piece of plywood, 60 feet to the ground.

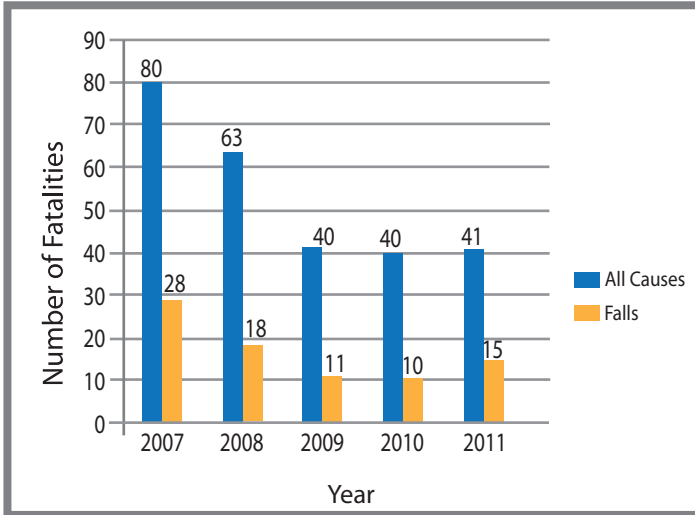
Case 5 (February 20, 2011; Okeechobee, FL) - A radio technician and a fellow co-worker were installing antennas and attaching wires on a radio tower. The technician fell from the tower, approximately 110 feet.



STATISTICS

Between 2007 and 2011, there was an average of 53 fatal construction accidents per year in Florida. Of these fatalities, 25-35% were due to falls.

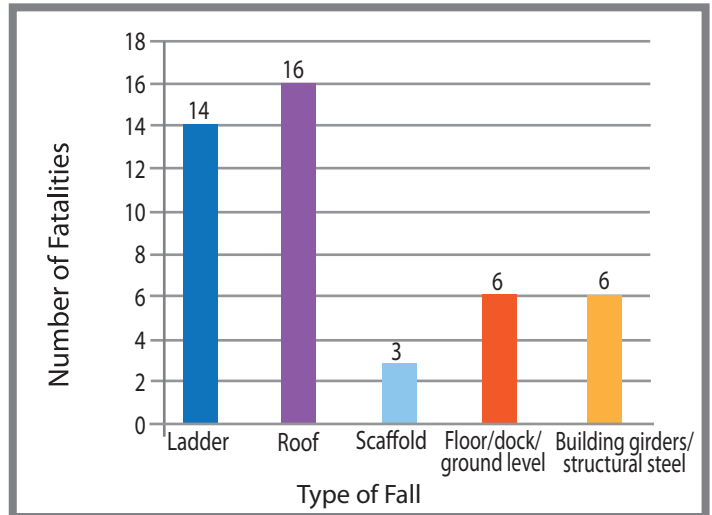
Figure 1. Number of Fatalities in the Construction Industry, Florida, 2007-2011



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

Between 2007 and 2010, falls from roofs were the leading cause of death in the construction industry, followed by falls from ladders.

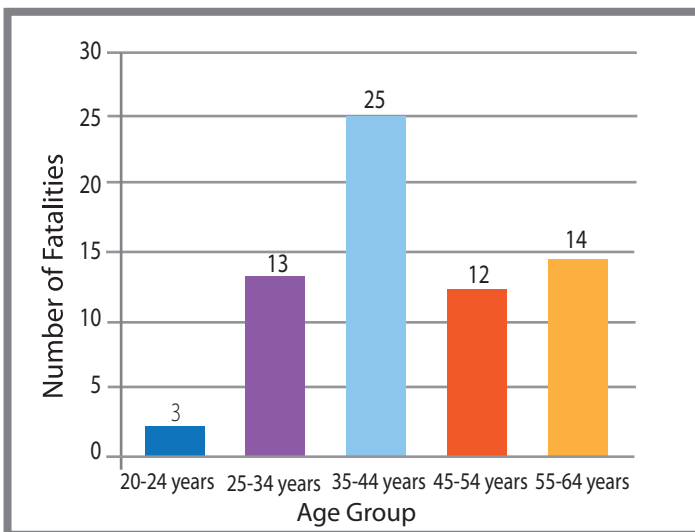
Figure 2. Number of Fatal Falls in the Construction Industry by Type of Fall, Florida, 2007-2010*



Note: Categories for type of fall changed in 2011.
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

The majority of fatal construction falls occurred in workers who were 35 to 44 years of age.

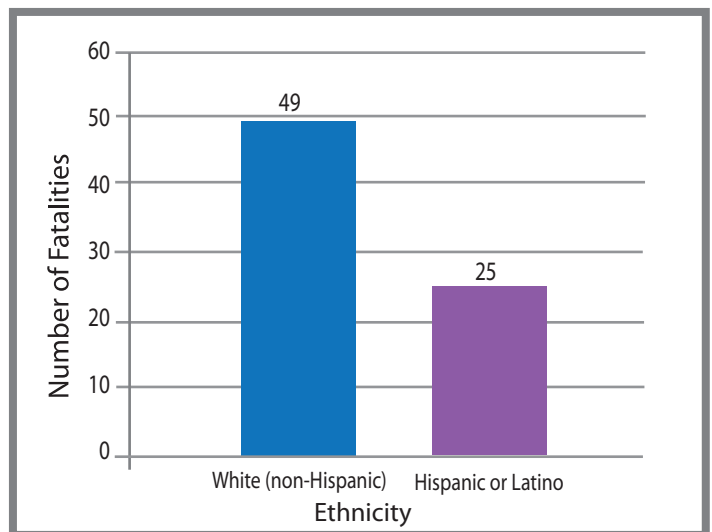
Figure 3. Number of Fatal Falls in the Construction Industry by Age Group, Florida, 2007-2011



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

Non-Hispanic white construction workers suffered almost twice as many fatal falls compared to Hispanics/Latinos.

Figure 4. Number of Fatal Falls in the Construction Industry by Ethnicity, Florida, 2007-2011



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

References:

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses