



Safety Management Services
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24 December 2015

Ms. Juliann Sum
Chief
Cal OSHA
1515 Clay Street, 6th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RECEIVED
DEC 29 2015
Division of Occupational Safety & Health
Headquarters Office

Reference: Fall Protection

Dear Ms. Sum:

Attached are three pictures that were taken at a job site over six months ago. While my client was not exposed to the hazards shown in the pictures, there were questions arising from the framing subcontractor's activities. One of the questions is why can framers work above 7 ½ feet without fall protection when the upper floors are sheeted and guardrails can be installed. In the interest of safety and applying work practices that go above and beyond the minimum requirements imposed by the Title 8 California Code of Regulations (Cal/OSHA), I have decided to ask you, as Chief of Cal/OSHA, what are the minimum acceptable safety standards allowed by the Division of Industrial Relations.

QUESTION #1: Refer to picture #1 – once the joists are sheeted and there is a floor or deck, if the height of the elevated floor/deck is 7 ½ feet or greater, are guardrails or other means of fall protection required to prevent workers from falling to a lower level?

QUESTION #2: Refer to picture #2 – once the deck or floor is sheeted, either completely or partially, does Cal/OSHA require the use of guardrails or other fall protection methods to prevent workers from falling to a lower level when the height of the deck/floor is 7 ½ feet or higher above the next lower level?

Should materials be stored at or near the edge of the deck where there is a possibility of the materials falling to a lower level and striking a person?

QUESTION #3: Refer to picture #3 – Same questions as #1 and #2. Also,

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**should the floor opening around the stairway have a guardrail around it?
The stairs are being used for access to the 2nd floor.**

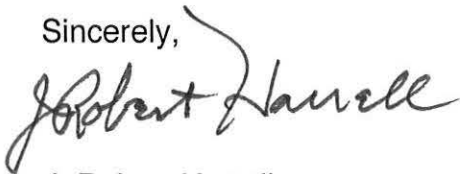
QUESTION #4: Training – what type and level of training is acceptable to Cal/OSHA for wood framers? Does the training have to be documented? What standard or standards, like the American National Standards Institute Z359 – 2007 Third Revision, are acceptable to Cal/OSHA?

QUESTION #5: Compliance Officer Training – what level of fall protection training is provided to the Cal/OSHA Compliance Officers and Cal/OSHA Consultation? Which safety standards are used in the training of the Cal/OSHA personnel?

I apologize for taking away from your valuable time. The purpose for asking these questions is to have documentation to show employers (contractors and subcontractors) when they state “But Cal/OSHA does not specifically state that in their regulations”.

Thank you for your time and courtesy.

Sincerely,

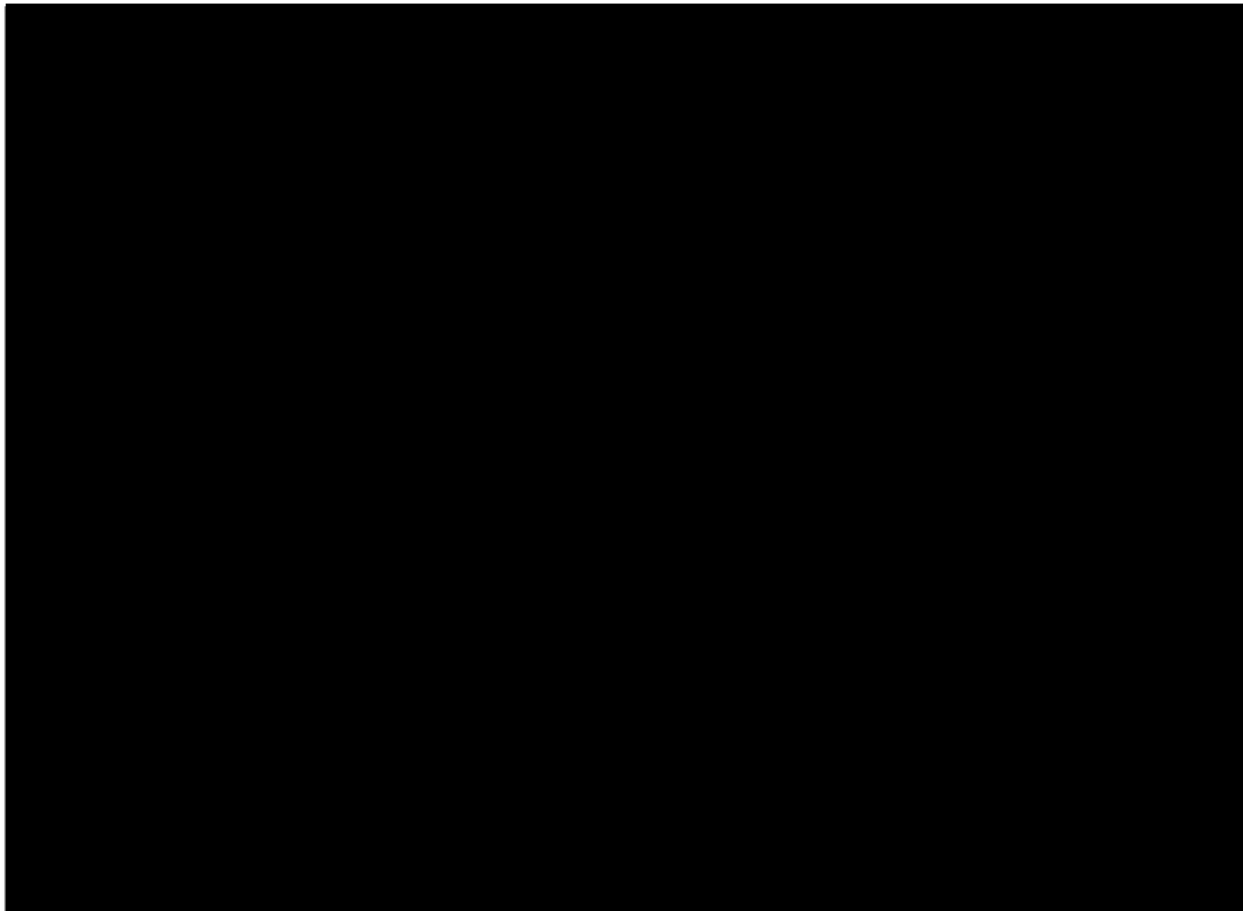
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Robert Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

J. Robert Harrell
President

Fall Protection Question #1
24 December 2015

Article 24 of the Construction Safety Orders, Section 1669, allows work to be performed from thrustouts or similar locations, such as trusses, beams, purlins, or plates of 4-inch nominal width, or greater, at elevations exceed 15 feet above ground, water surface, or floor level below and where temporary guardrail protection is impracticable, employees shall be required to use approved personal fall protection systems in accordance with Section 1670.

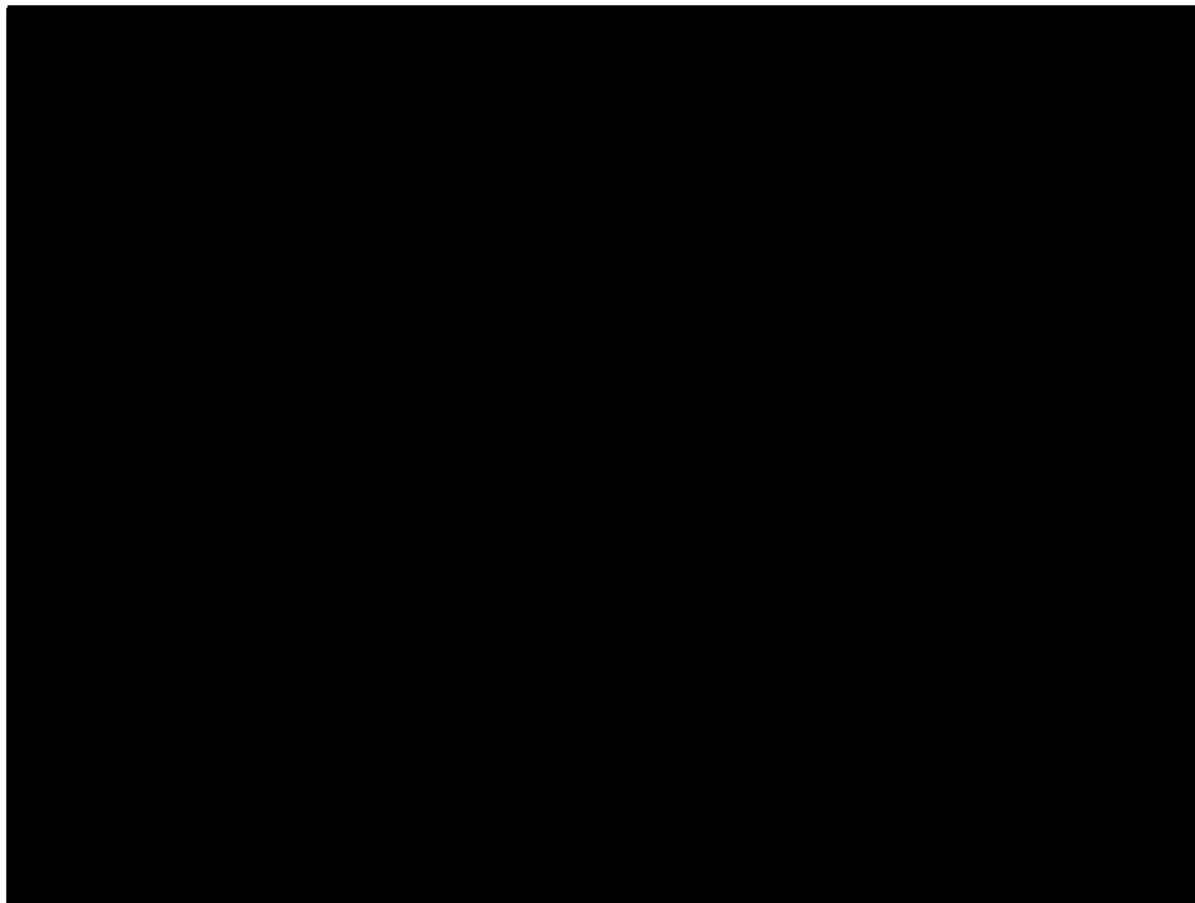
QUESTION: Given that guardrails and fall protection equipment that can be used for this type of work, such as temporary anchors manufactured for fall arrest and fall restraint, is it acceptable for individuals to work on sheeted floors that do not have some type of approved fall protection system?



Fall Protection Question #2
24 December 2015

Same question as #1. Also, should the floor openings at the north and south corners of the floor be covered per the Cal/OSHA regulations or have guardrails around the openings.

Should the materials be stored close to the edge of the floor?



Fall Protection Question #3
24 December 2015

Should guardrails be installed around the perimeter of the floor where it is practical for them to be installed?

Should the area in front of the ladder used to access the 2nd level have guardrails around the deck opening where the stairway from the 1st to the 2nd floor is located?

