

OSHA Regional News Release

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U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA urges construction companies in Southwestern Pennsylvania to take action to prevent worker falls

PITTSBURGH -- Following four fatal construction accidents that recently took place in southwestern Pennsylvania, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is calling on construction companies to ensure that employees working above six feet have the proper equipment to protect themselves from falls on the job.

"Falls are the leading cause of fatalities in the construction industry," says Robert Szymanski, director of the Pittsburgh OSHA office. "These recent accidents in Allegheny and Washington counties are tragic reminders of the dangers posed to workers when adequate protection is not provided."

There are a number of ways to protect workers from falls including guardrail systems, safety net systems and personal fall arrest systems, including properly anchored body harnesses and lanyards, as well as through the use of safe work practices and training. For more information on fall protection, visit OSHA's Web site at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/fallprotection/index.html> or contact the Pittsburgh OSHA area office at 412-395-4903. OSHA also has a hotline at 800-321-6742 to report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers.

OSHA operates a vigorous enforcement program, conducting almost 39,000 inspections and finding nearly 88,000 violations of its standards and regulations in fiscal year 2008.