

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Cal/OSHA Announces Safety Awareness Campaign for Roofers

Oakland—Cal/OSHA today launched a safety awareness campaign for roofers, where the workplace incidence of serious injuries and fatalities is higher compared to other industries.

“Roofing operations are inherently risky and worker safety is paramount. Employers must have strong safety programs in place that include appropriate equipment and training to prevent injuries on the job,” said Christine Baker, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations, which oversees Cal/OSHA.

Between 2012 and 2014, Cal/OSHA conducted 126 investigations of roofing operations where an accident occurred. A full three out of four of those accidents occurred at roofing operations that were found to be in violation of state safety regulations.

Falls are the leading cause of death and serious injury for roofing workers. Most falls can be avoided by following safety regulations. For example, on December 27, 2013, West Coast Roofing employee Leopoldo Retana fell 36 feet to his death at a job site in Ventura. Investigators found Mr. Retana had not been wearing fall protection equipment or a positioning system. West Coast Roofing was cited \$22,360 for 10 violations, including two serious in nature. Serious violations are those where death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard created by the violation.

Another tragic and preventable case occurred earlier that year on June 13, 2013, when Midwest Roofing & Solar employee Ernesto Rosales fell approximately 17 feet from the unprotected edge of an apartment building roof in Pico Rivera. Mr. Rosales died five days after the accident. Cal/OSHA cited Midwest Roofing & Solar \$39,600 for five serious violations.

Cal/OSHA’s “Roofing Maximum Enforcement Program,” taking place from March 1 through November 1, calls for targeted inspections of roofing operations across the state. This program will help ensure employers provide the necessary training and safety equipment to protect their workers on the job.

“Cal/OSHA inspectors will carefully review safety measures at roofing operations and address safety issues they encounter,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “Our goal is to raise awareness for on-the-job safety in the roofing industry so that hazards are identified and corrected.”

Fall protection is among the items Cal/OSHA inspectors will be reviewing at the site visits, from railings on buildings to personal devices such as hooks that attach to vests. Inspectors will verify that workers have safe access to rooftops and are protected from electrocution hazards posed by overhead power lines. Also, inspectors will review employers' heat illness prevention program at roofing operations where reflected surfaces can increase the heat factor of the climate.

If inspectors find a lack of protection or a serious hazard, they can issue a stop order at the site until the hazards are corrected. Employers who fail to comply with Cal/OSHA safety regulations will be cited and ordered to correct the violations.

Cal/OSHA offers [online resources](#) for workers and employers, with a fact sheet on [preventing slips and falls for roofers](#) and other [safety publications](#). Hazardous conditions at roofing operations and other worksites can be reported to [Cal/OSHA's enforcement offices](#). Enforcement officers respond immediately to such reports.

Cal/OSHA, an active partner in the [Labor Enforcement Task Force](#) (LETf), also works collaboratively on the Roofing Compliance Working Group. The multi-agency coalition includes LETf enforcement agencies, local district attorneys' offices, roofing contractors and labor groups. It helps to hold accountable those employers who fail to comply with safety regulations, cheat workers on earnings, fail to carry workers' compensation insurance, or fail to pay state payroll taxes.

Employers can receive free and voluntary assistance to help them improve their health and safety compliance with Cal/OSHA's [Consultation Program](#). Employers can learn more about this program by calling (800) 963-9424.

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. Employees with work-related questions or complaints may call the California Workers' Information Hotline at (866) 924-9757 for recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics.

For media inquiries contact Erika Monterroza at (510) 286-1164 or Peter Melton at (510) 286-7046.



The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For non-media inquiries, contact DIR's Communications Call Center at 1-844-LABOR-DIR (1-844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department