

## N E W S R E L E A S E

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### **Cal/OSHA Finds Employer at Fault in Window Washer's Fall**

**San Francisco**—Following an investigation into a window washer's eleven-story fall from the roof of a San Francisco building, Cal/OSHA today cited Century Window Cleaning for five safety hazards. Two of the five hazards cited were for serious violations including the failure to secure the roof with fall protection equipment and inadequate training on the proper use of the victim's personal fall protection equipment.

When the window washer lost his balance and fell on November 21, 2014, he landed on a moving automobile. Both the driver of the vehicle and the employee survived with serious injuries.

"While it is miraculous that this man survived a fall from this height, his fall is an essential reminder that employers are required to provide protections from the hazards of high elevation work," said Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) Director Christine Baker. Cal/OSHA is a division of the DIR.

Cal/OSHA investigators determined that Pedro Perez, (58), was in the process of moving the extension cord of a suspended scaffold around the corner of the building at 400 Montgomery Street in San Francisco. As he moved toward the edge of the roof, he disconnected the lanyard of his fall protection equipment from an anchor point. He then lost his balance and tumbled over the edge.

"Falls from elevation are a leading cause of death and injury among workers. Cal/OSHA just concluded a statewide effort to highlight the importance of fall safety protection, including a review of fall protection equipment and the need to train on its use," stated Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum.

In total, there were five citations with proposed penalties of \$12,765 issued in this case: three general, one serious and one serious accident related citations. A general violation is cited when an accident or illness resulting from the violation of a standard would probably not cause death or serious harm, but would have a direct effect on the

health of employees. In contrast, a serious violation is cited when there is a realistic possibility that death or serious physical harm could result from the violation.

In 2008, Cal/OSHA cited Century Window Cleaning \$2,720 for four violations, one of which was serious, following a complaint-based investigation.

According to 2013 [statistics on California workplace fatalities](#) published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 22 of 61 fatalities in the construction industry were due to slips, trips and falls. Cal/OSHA maintains [helpful lists](#) of fall protection requirements and safety information on its website.

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. Employers who want to learn more about California workplace health and safety standards or labor law violations can access information on DIR's [website](#) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Cal/OSHA's Consultation Program provides free and voluntary assistance to employers and employee organizations to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from the Cal/OSHA Consultation Program.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may call the toll-free California Workers' Information Line at (866) 924-9757 for recorded information, in English and Spanish, on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with Cal/OSHA District Offices.

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 general 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