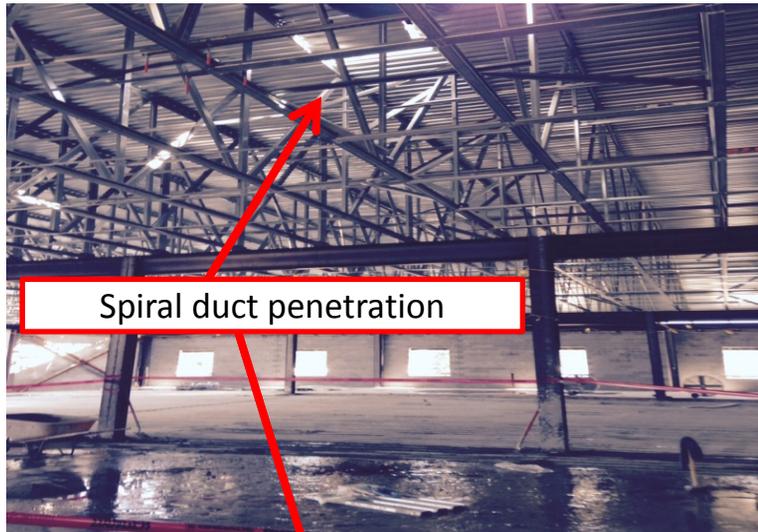


# Safety Snapshot - Fatal Mishap

## Construction Contractor Employee Falls Through Floor Opening



**Activity:** An HVAC crew was cutting a hole through an attic corrugated metal deck to install a 36" spiral duct. After cutting three (3) sides, obstructions were discovered below the deck, which required the cutter to leave the area while his co-worker (victim) remained to monitor the partially cut hole opening.

**Direct Cause:** Employee disconnected his fall protection harness from the Self Retractable Lifeline (SRL) system and stepped into an unprotected hole in an attic floor deck resulting in a 25' fall to the lower level.

**Indirect Cause:** Distraction/changed condition - Witnesses reported that the victim went to assist another co-worker in the area and removed his retractable lanyard as he left the the exposed hole. Returning minutes later to his original position at the hole, he failed to re-connect his retractable lanyard and fell through the hole opening. Reportedly, the employee received a verbal warning earlier that day when a fall protection near miss was observed.

### Initial Lessons Learned:

- Warning line systems must be established to demarcate locations where workers transition from no fall protection required zones to fall protection required zones.
- Competent persons for fall protection activities require certification of training, consideration of experience and an employer designation letter.

### Short term actions:

- All work has been suspended pending the comprehensive safety investigation outcomes – final lessons learned will be distributed.
- Upon receiving the contractor's updated and complete site safety assessment, the ROICC will complete and document an independent site quality assurance evaluation to verify the contractor's thoroughness.
- Acceptance of the previous fall protection competent person has been rescinded. A new competent person is to be identified and accepted.



What can go wrong?

What can I do about it?

If I can't do anything about it, whom do I tell?