

Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Mid-Atlantic **Safety Lessons Learned Incident Abstract**

Accident Type: FALL FROM HEIGHT
Injury: MULTIPLE BROKEN BONES
Damage: NONE TO EQUIPMENT
Type of Work: REPAIRING ELECTRICAL CONDUCTORS
Equipment: 1997 INTERNATIONAL UTILITY BUCKET TRUCK



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT:

- ✚ After completing electrical work employee removed full body harness and climbed from bucket to manufacturer's lower platform walkway, located on top of tool bin, upon turning to walk along platform he lost his balance and fell to the ground suffering a fracture to his front skull, cracked neck vertebrae, broken left wrist and severe damage to his right wrist.

DIRECT CAUSE:

- ✚ No attachment point for fall protection equipment outside of bucket
- ✚ Removing fall protection harness and lanyard prior to returning to ground

INDIRECT CAUSE:

- ✚ AHA did not adequately cover 100% fall protection until worker was safely on the ground
- ✚ Fall protection not required below 6 feet height
- ✚ Design of truck did not allow use of railing and/or a safe practical place to attach a lanyard
- ✚ Possible inattention or lack of awareness of surroundings at completion of work

ROOT CAUSE:

- ✚ Design of truck did not allow/provide fall protection on lower levels of truck

LESSONS LEARNED:

- ✚ Fall protection should be addressed even when possible falls are less than 6 feet.
- ✚ EM-385, OSHA, Manufacturer of utility bucket truck, do not address potential of falling less than 6 feet however this incident clearly requires possible fall protection issues need be addressed even when the fall distance is less than 6 feet
- ✚ Moving towards a true safety culture requires all possible activity hazard safety situations be addressed not just implementing the required fall protection standards.
- ✚ End of work part of mission is not the end of safety. Rushing, Fatigue and Complacency can contribute to critical errors such as eyes not on task, mind not on task, balance/traction/grip issues which should all be addressed on AHA until employee is safely on the ground.