

**Preliminary Findings into the  
August 25, 2009 Fall from Height at  
Whitehorse Copper Subdivision Worksite**

## **PURPOSE:**

The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board has seen a recent increase in the number of serious injuries resulting from falls from heights. These initial findings are being released to provide information into the direct causes of one of these falls. It is hoped that providing this information will encourage others to review these causes and examine their own workplaces to ensure similar conditions either do not exist or, if they do, are immediately corrected.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

On August 25, 2009 at Whitehorse Copper Subdivision, Yukon, a construction company supervisor fell from a roof on which he was working. The supervisor landed 9.14 metres (30 feet) below, causing severe injuries to his back. The roof was constructed from metal with a pitch of 6/12 and had unguarded edges.

The incident happened around 10am and environmental conditions at the time resulted in a slipping hazard on the roof. The worker had been supplied with and used fall arrest equipment while working on the roof previously, but had gone up onto the roof to perform a short duration task and failed to don either a travel restraint or a fall arrest system.

## **DIRECT CAUSES:**

Preliminary findings indicate that the direct causes of this fall are a result of a worker working on a metal roof with a 6/12 pitch and unguarded edges without using appropriate fall protective equipment. The worker went up onto the roof to screw in a missing screw; he over-reached, slipped and fell to the ground.

## **PREVENTION:**

The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board remind all workplace parties that, *prior to commencing any work*, they are required to assess all the hazards that workers must deal with, then design and implement appropriate measures to reduce the risk of injury.

Yukon Occupational Health and Safety Regulation states:

- 10.11** A worker shall be protected by the use of a fall restraint system, a fall arrest system, a control zone, or another system of fall protection acceptable to the director when a worker is engaged in any work on a roof that
- (a) is 3 m (10 ft.) or more above the ground or other safe working level,
  - (b) has a slope of 2 vertical to 3 horizontal or steeper, or
  - (c) has an unguarded edge.

All workers working at heights must be protected by appropriate fall prevention measures, provided with appropriate fall prevention equipment and required to use the fall prevention measures at all times. These measures may include guardrails around the edges from which a worker might fall, travel restraint or fall arrest systems, or any combination thereof.

Workers must follow the appropriate fall prevention measures and must use the fall protection equipment provided by their employer.

Employers are required to develop and implement fall prevention and rescue plans whenever they have workers working at heights.

Employers are also required to provide all workers that work from heights with training in fall prevention techniques, fall prevention systems, use, care and maintenance Personal Protective Equipment, and rescue techniques.