



Improper Use of an Extension Ladder

Lesson Learned

The incident: This incident occurred to an employee of a concrete contractor. The injured employee fell off a ladder. The injured employee and a foreman had taken apart an extension ladder so that they could both use half of the ladder. The injured worker was using the upper half that was not properly supported, causing the ladder to slip and he fell; impaling himself on a piece of rebar. The rebar entered his throat and exited through his cheek. He was taken immediately to the hospital where his fractured jaw was surgically repaired and he was placed in a drug induced coma.

Why the incident occurred: The top half of an extension ladder should never be used alone. The feet on the bottom half of the ladder provide traction and stability to the ladder. The end of ladder being used by the injured employee slid on the concrete and caused the employee to fall. In addition, the rebar was not capped as required.

Preventive measures: The extension ladder should have been used as described in the manufacturer’s instructions. All rebar that poses an impalement hazard due to work being performed above the rebar should be capped. Only rebar caps designed to provide impalement protection, such as those containing steel reinforcement, should be used.

This type of cap (shown below) positions a 2 x 4 over the exposed rebar, and has been approved by Cal-OSHA.

Only rebar caps designed to provide impalement protection should be used.

This type of cap positions a 2 x 4 over the exposed rebar, and has been approved by CalOSHA.

Proper safety feet on extension ladder



SafeALERT



ORCIG 2018 SafeAlert Series

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