

FATAL ALERT

On September 23, 2014, an employee was in the process of installing television cable in an alley way when he fell from a ladder used specifically for this purpose of working on suspended cables. The ladder was of the correct load rating. No evidence of damage to the ladder was present and all of the ladders examined were found to carry current annual independent inspection stickers. The ladder was equipped specifically for lineman work. The employee did have his required PPE with him and appeared to have been wearing it. The employee admitted that he missed a rung on the top rung of the ladder and fell. The employee was considered to always follow the safety requirement's relating to his work. The employee later died of complications relating to the injury sustained from the fall.

Significant Factors

- This incident was the result of an unwitnessed fall from a ladder positioned on a "strand cable".
- The ladder apparently was properly positioned, and in good condition.
- The employee admitted that he missed the top rung on the ladder.
- The lineman ladder has fold out hooks which hang the ladder on the span cable, the ladder would not/could not be extended for use above the very top of the span cable.
- The employee had no reason to travel beyond eye level at the top rung.
- Based upon this and all other supporting information The employees overall health may have contributed to his fall and his death.

Recommendations

- Continue to conduct routine inspections of trucks, equipment and PPE.
- Implement a safety program section relevant to the physical demands of the job title specific and site specific work activities.
- Recognize physical limitations of employees and applicants where appropriate to evaluate suitability for the position for which the employee is hired or retained.