

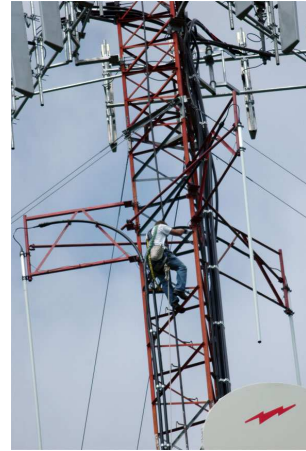
TOOLBOX TALK #32

TOWER WORKER FALLS 260 FEET

A 24-year-old tower climber died after falling from a communication tower under construction.

The climber was part of a 3-person crew. He was a certified instructor and the designated safety person and fall protection trainer for the company. He was wearing a full body harness equipped with a positioning lanyard and a Y-lanyard.

The crew, which was in the process of adding the final 20-foot section to the self-supporting tower, was using a gin pole to “stack” the tower sections and had just raised the pole into position. The workers used a 6-foot jump plate to help lift and position the gin pole. The climber was in the process of unbolting the plate so it could be lowered to the ground. After removing the last bolt that secured the plate to the tower, he leaned back – and fell 260 feet to the ground. The climber had not connected either pelican hook of his Y-lanyard to an anchor point on the tower.



An investigation had found that the employer had developed safe rigging and lifting plans for the job and had provided all required personal protective equipment and training. The employer and crew were unable to identify circumstances that did not allow the climber to tie off.

To help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- Establish and maintain a communication system among all workers onsite, as well as ensure workers on the tower communicate and confirm step-by-step procedures anytime they change positions or perform tasks that require them to detach and reattach their fall arrest systems.
- Frequently reinforce training on proper use of fall protection equipment, with emphasis on always maintaining one point of attachment and reattaching immediately after detaching to maintain 100% tie-off.