

# Falls in the Construction Industry

Falls are the leading cause of death in the construction industry, and they have been happening far too frequently in Philadelphia.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, [falls accounted for 40% of all fatalities](#) investigated by OSHA's Philadelphia office since October 1, 2015.

## Investigations into Falls at Construction Sites

In January 2016, a construction worker, 50-year-old John Johnson, [died after falling into the Delaware River](#) from a pier in South Philadelphia. Five Philadelphia construction workers died in a one-month span last summer. Roofing worker Roy Chacon was only 37 years old when he fell 25 feet to his death on July 7.

An OSHA investigation into these and other incidents found that workers are not using the proper safety equipment. In June, OSHA officials investigated a job site at 934 Arch Street and determined that workers were exposed to fall hazards and cave-ins. Hau Dau Construction, which has previously been cited for similar violations, could be fined \$72,511 for [failing to provide guardrails](#) and other safety precautions.

## Construction Worker Safety Awareness Campaign

OSHA has joined forces with the City of Philadelphia's Licenses and Inspections and the Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health to address construction safety in the region. The groups launched a grassroots safety awareness campaign last summer, called Grassroots Injury-

Illness Prevention (GRIIP).

Philadelphia regulates the construction industry under the state-adopted [Uniform Construction Code](#) and the local Building Occupancy and Construction Code. The [Licenses and Inspections](#) office educates the public about these regulations, performs site inspections, and issues business licenses, building permits, and other certifications.

The [Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health \(PhilaPOSH\)](#) is an organization comprised of union members, workers, and legal and health professionals. PhilaPOSH educates the public on worker safety issues, including workers' compensation and recognizing job safety hazards.

### Responsibilities Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act

Under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act, employers are required to provide their employees with a safe work environment. The act contains provisions that are specific to the construction industry, including:

- ? It is the employer's responsibility to prevent accidents and provide for regular safety inspections;
- ? OSHA must provide education programs on unsafe working conditions;
- ? Employers must ensure access to first aid services and medical care;
- ? Employers must maintain fire prevention practices throughout all phases of the construction project;
- ? Employers must ensure that debris is removed from the construction site at regular intervals;
- ? The construction site must be well-lit;
- ? Employers must provide workers with safe drinking water; and
- ? Employers must require workers to wear appropriate personal protective equipment when exposed to hazardous conditions;

These are just a few of the regulations pertaining to the

construction industry.

Contact us Today

Workers employed in Philadelphia's construction industry are protected under the state's [Workers' Compensation Act](#). Martin law is the law firm that stands up for Philadelphia workers. Contact us today if you have been [injured on the job](#) or contracted a work-related illness and need assistance. We will be with you every step of the way.