

#23: Fall – Inspection #1001482

A **52 year old male** employee fell 26 feet to his death into a waste vault. Two employees were in the process of removing a bull horn attachment from the transfer bell on a lifting device so that a grapple attachment could be installed. The grapple attachment was used to remove the cover from the waste vault. The victim was troubleshooting the hook of the transfer bell and bull horn attachment while 34 inches from the floor opening into the waste vault. The victim was required to walk in close proximity to the floor opening to troubleshoot the removal of the attachment. When the victim walked to the far side of the transfer bell he took a few steps back and fell into the floor opening. The victim was wearing a full body harness, as he had used his fall protection while climbing the transfer bell prior to its removal from the vault. The employer had provided anchor points around the opening for the use of fall protection and had trained employees on the proper use of the fall arrest systems. However, employees interviewed could not consistently explain the company policy of when to use the supplied fall protection, nor were there any periodic inspections of the fall protection’s use.

Citation(s) as Originally Issued

A complete inspection was conducted at the accident scene. Some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality.

Citation 1

Item 1 1910.23(a)(8)	Every floor opening into which persons can accidentally walk was not guarded: In that two employees were exposed to a floor opening fall hazard at the 116’ area. The two employees were working near a transfer vault that had an opening diameter of 103.75”.
Item 2 1910.146(c)(1)	The employer did not evaluate the workplace to determine if any spaces were permit-required confined spaces: In that an adequate evaluation of the transfer vault was not completed as the means of entry, design for continuous occupancy, and hazardous atmosphere were not acknowledged in order to effectively define the hazards of the space.

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Photo 1 of 1: Employee fell 26 feet to his death into a waste vault