

Investigation Report

Worker fatally injured after fall from scaffold

May 3, 2016

The contents of this report

This document reports Occupational Health and Safety's (OHS) investigation of a workplace fatality due to a fall from a scaffold in May 2016. It begins with a short summary of what happened. The rest of the report covers this same information in greater detail.

Incident summary

Workers from an exterior stucco contractor were installing stucco on the exterior of a new residential multi-family development. One worker fell from the lower work platform on a single-pole scaffold, which was at approximately the second floor of the building. The worker sustained fatal injuries as a result of the fall.

Background information

Richmond Park Developments Ltd. (RPD Homes) was a residential development and renovation company in Calgary that had been in operation since 2009. RPD Homes was the prime contractor and developer of the multi-unit property called "The Stanley" located at 4203 Stanley Road southwest (SW) (original site address), 105 to 115, 41 Avenue SW (re-designated site address), Calgary, Alberta. The development site consisted of a four-plex multi-family townhouse condominium development and a two-plex townhouse condominium development. RPD Homes contracted Vedas General Contracting Ltd. to apply the exterior stucco texturing to the four-plex and two-plex developments.

Vedas General Contracting Ltd. (Vedas) was a stucco contractor located in Calgary, Alberta that had been in operation since 2005. Vedas employed an owner/operator (owner) as well as labourers. Vedas had worked on multiple other projects for RPD Homes prior to starting work at the Stanley project.

Worker 1 had started work with Vedas the previous day at a different worksite and had been hired as a stucco worker on a trial basis. The worker had indicated that they had worked previously in the stucco industry.

Equipment and materials

Single-Pole Scaffold (no manufacturer markings)

The scaffold (Figure 1) consisted of metal tubing (46 millimetres (mm) in diameter) which was assembled using scaffolding clamps, bearing brackets, manufactured metal scaffolding tie-ins (wall-clips) and wooden planks to form a light-duty work scaffold configured in a single-pole scaffold design.

The work platforms were accessed via un-secured aluminum extension ladders.

The scaffolding was obtained by VEDAS through Kijiji and Alberta Drywall & Stucco Supply Inc.

According to the U.S. Department of Labour, a single-pole scaffold is defined as: *a supported scaffold consisting of a platform(s) resting on bearers, the outside ends of which are supported on runners secured to a single row of posts or uprights, and the inner ends of which are supported on or in a structure or building wall.*



Figure 1. Single-pole scaffolding system in place at 115, 41 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta on May 3, 2016, immediately after the incident. Based upon information provided to OHS immediately following the incident, worker 1 fell from the lower level (6.05 metres (m)) as indicated with arrow A. Arrow B indicates the approximate location where the second worker (employer) was located at time of incident (work platform height of 8.33 m).

Sequence of events

On May 3, 2016, three workers employed by Vedas (the owner, worker 1, and a ground labourer) were on site to apply stucco to Units 107 and 115 at RPD Homes, the Stanley project site.

The workers began the day installing single-pole scaffolding on Unit 107 and applying a stucco coating to the exterior front of this unit. Once Unit 107 was completed, the workers proceeded to erect single-pole scaffolding on Unit 115 in order to apply stucco to the front of this unit. After the scaffolding was completed on Unit 115, the workers started applying stucco materials to the exterior front of this unit before going for lunch.

After their lunch break, the workers (the owner and worker 1) resumed applying stucco to Unit 115. The owner was on the upper level of the scaffold on the fourth unit, and the second worker (worker 1) was on the lower level of the same scaffolding system. After indicating that they felt unwell, worker 1, on the lower work platform of the scaffold, sat down. At approximately 2:00 p.m., the worker fell off the lower level of the scaffold from a height of 6.05 m and landed on the ground where they sustained head injuries. Worker 1 was transported to Foothills Medical Centre where they later succumbed to their injuries. At the time of the incident, neither worker on the scaffolding was wearing fall protection.

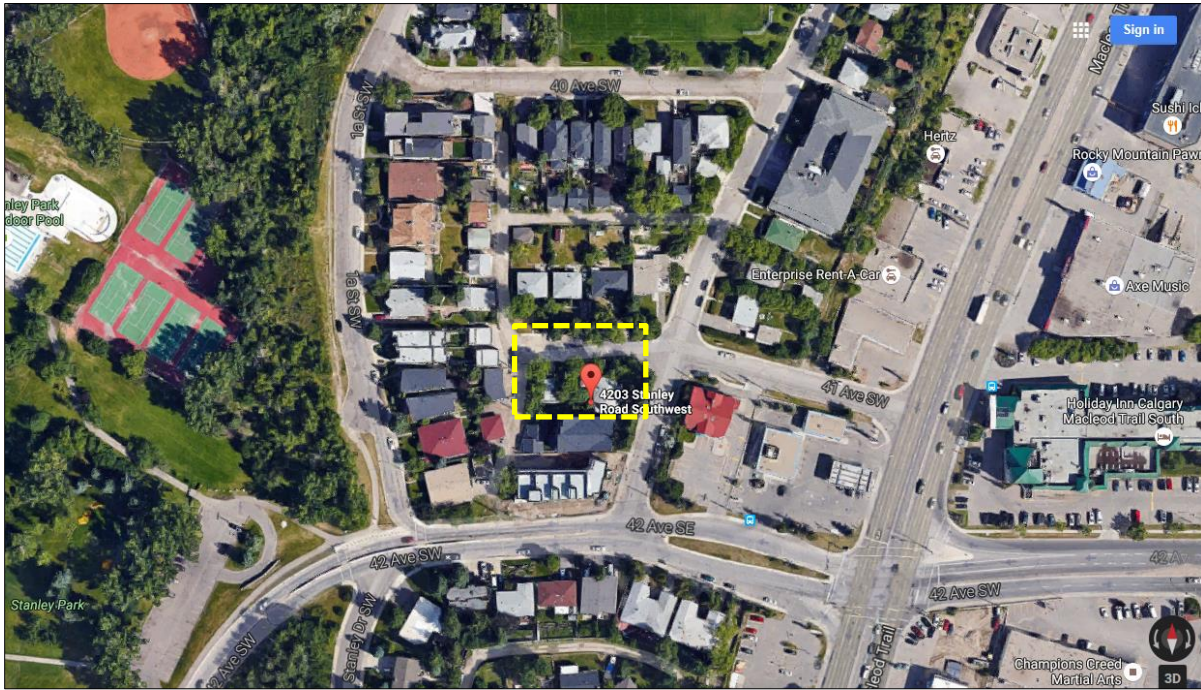


Figure 2. Google map showing location of worksite (4203 Stanley Road SW, Calgary, Alberta). The site was re-numbered 101 to 115, 41 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta at the time of incident.

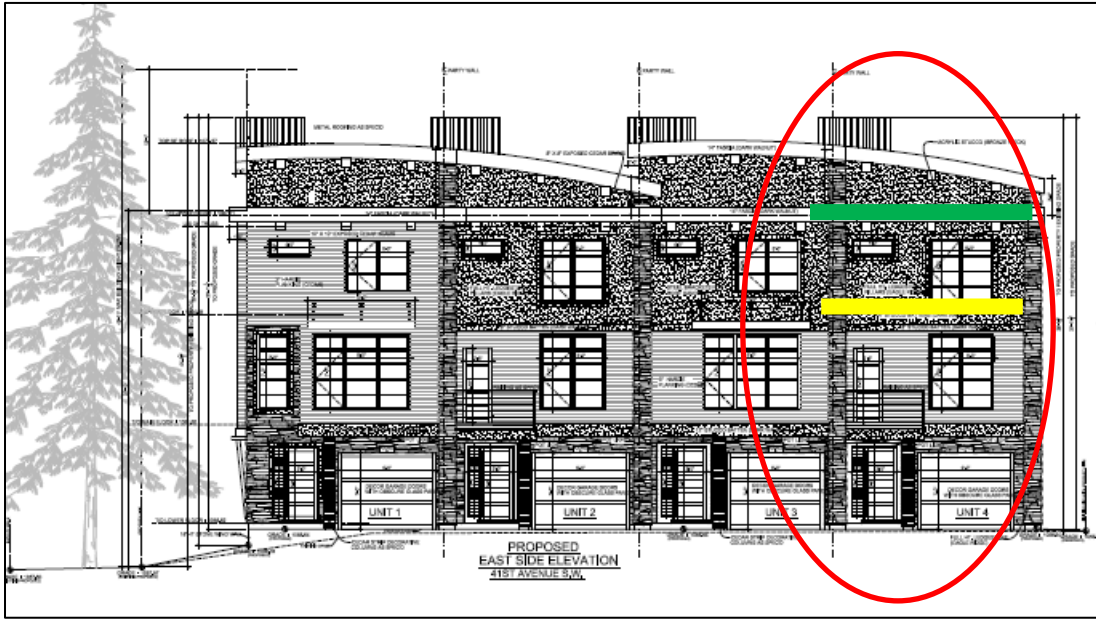


Figure 3. Architectural drawing of the front elevation of 101 to 115, 41 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta. The unit where the worker fell is circled in red. The green line is approximately where the upper scaffold deck was located (8.33 m). The yellow line is approximately where the lower scaffold deck was located (6.05 m) from where worker 1 fell.

Completion

Vedas General Contracting Ltd. (Vedas)

A review for enforcement action was completed on January 11, 2017, and it was determined that the file would be referred to Alberta Justice for review. The entire file was sent to Alberta Justice on January 13, 2017. Charges were laid on April 30, 2018. Vedas pled guilty to Section 2(1)(a)(i) of the *OHS Act*, failure to ensure the health and safety of a worker. On November 14, 2018, Vedas was convicted and fined \$160,000 inclusive of the 15% Victim Fine Surcharge (VFS) and placed on corporate probation for 1.5 years. In addition, they were ordered under the *OHS Act*, Section 41.1 to pay \$40,000 to Alberta Construction Safety Association (ACSA) to fund a project to revise and update its Scaffolding Awareness Course and to develop a related Best Practice for distribution to members of ACSA and the Building Industry and Land Development Alberta Association (BILD). All other charges were withdrawn.

Richmond Park Developments Ltd. (RPD Homes)

A review for enforcement action was completed on January 11, 2017, and it was determined that the file would be referred to Alberta Justice for review. The entire file was sent to Alberta Justice on January 13, 2017. Charges were laid on April 30, 2018. RPD Homes pled guilty to Section 3(3) of the *OHS Act*, failure to ensure that the *OHS Act*, the Regulations and the Adopted Code were complied with in respect of the work site. On May 24, 2019, RPD Homes was fined \$125,000 inclusive of the VFS and placed on corporate probation for 2 years. All other charges were withdrawn.

This investigation was closed on May 27, 2019.

Final Report

Signatures

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

May 27, 2019

Lead Investigator

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

June 11, 2019

Manager

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

August 1, 2019

Director

Date