

Investigation Report  
Worker Fatally Injured After Fall from Roof  
December 4, 2014

## **The contents of this report**

This document reports Occupational Health and Safety's (OHS) investigation of a fatality in December of 2014. It begins with a short summary of what happened. The rest of the report covers this same information in greater detail.

## **Incident summary**

Six workers were clearing snow off the tin roof of a commercial building. The workers were pushing and pulling the snow from the south edge of the building and pushing the snow off the north edge. The injured worker had been clearing the snow from the south edge of the building when the worker lost footing and fell approximately 8.23 metres (m) to the ground below. The worker was transported to hospital where the worker later died from traumatic injuries sustained in the fall.

## **Background information**

MacBain Properties Ltd. is a privately-held real estate company that offers services for the development and management of properties throughout North America. The company currently manages over 60 developed office, industrial, and workforce housing properties.

Robideau Roofing Ltd. provides roofing services for residential and commercial buildings. They are located in Grande Prairie, Alberta and have been in business since 1978.

Heritage Commercial Roofing Ltd. is owned and operated by \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* and located in Grande Prairie, Alberta. \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* also own and operate Heritage Roofing Ltd.

MacBain Properties hired Robideau Roofing to re-roof a commercial building that is a multi-tenant facility located in Clairmont, Alberta. Robideau Roofing then sub-contracted the job to Heritage Commercial Roofing Ltd.

## Equipment and materials

Heritage Commercial Roofing started the re-roofing job on the commercial building in early November 2014. The workers started the re-roofing at the west end of the building. The workers built and installed wooden guardrails along the south, west and north edges of the building. There were two 13.11 m sections on the north and south sides that did not have any guard rails installed. The building measured 8.23 m from the roof edge to location where the worker fell to the ground.



*Figure 1. A indicates the unguarded south edge of the building where the worker fell from. The red circle indicates the location where the worker landed. (Photo taken by OHS)*

### Sequence of events

The task for the six workers on the date of the incident was to clear the snow from the tin roof in preparation for this section to be re-roofed. The work started at approximately 8:30 a.m. The workers would each clear a row of the roof from one end to the other, pushing the snow off the north end of the roof. Both the south and north sections of the roof were not guarded and the workers did not have any fall protection system in place.

The injured worker had been clearing the snow from the south edge of the roof. At some point during this task, it is believed that the worker had turned away from the edge and was walking north when the worker lost footing and fell 8.23 m to the ground below. Emergency services were contacted, and the worker was transported to the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital in Grande Prairie where the worker later died from injuries received in the fall.



Figure 2. This is the north side of the building and shows the unguarded edge that measures 13.11 m in length. (Photo taken by OHS)



*Figure 3. This is looking to the north side of the building. The red circle indicates the shovels that the workers were using to remove the snow from the tin roof. This was not the original location of the shovels; they were stacked together after the incident. (Photo taken by OHS)*



*Figure 4. This is the south edge of the roof top where the worker fell from. The distance from the parapet to the ground was measured at 8.23 m. (Photo taken by OHS)*

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### **Completion**

A review for enforcement action was completed on September 9, 2015, and it was determined that the file would be referred to Alberta Justice for review. The entire file was sent to Alberta Justice in November 2015. Charges were laid on October 26, 2016. On April 20, 2017, Heritage Commercial Roofing Ltd. pled guilty to Section 139(1)(a) of the Occupational Health and Safety Code, being an employer, failed to ensure a worker was protected from falling from a temporary or permanent work area where the worker could fall a vertical distance of three metres or more. At sentencing, Heritage Commercial Roofing Ltd. was fined \$150,000 plus a victim fine surcharge of \$22,500 for a total penalty of \$172,500. Additionally, Heritage Commercial Roofing Ltd. was placed on two years of corporate probation.

This file was closed on April 21, 2017.

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Final Report

**Signatures**

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

September 26, 2017

Lead Investigator

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

October 10, 2017

Manager

Date

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED

October 18, 2017

Director

Date