



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Safety Alert No. 218
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Fall Results in Fatality

In preparation for sandblasting operations, a contractor employee was wrapping a light fixture that extended out from a stairway landing that was approximately 25 feet above the plus 10 deck. As he was reaching through the guardrail, the fixture gave way, resulting in his falling through the guardrail for approximately 23 feet before striking his head on a beam at the plus 12 level. The employee then fell into the water. He could not be resuscitated after his retrieval by a dispatched motor vessel.

The MMS investigation of the accident concluded that the causes of the accident were as follows:

1. The apparent decision of the employee to ignore verbal instructions from his supervisor regarding the use of PPE and a spider. The instructions were communicated to him at the pre-job safety meeting that took place within an hour before the accident.
2. The informality of the pre-job safety meeting Job Safety Analysis (JSA). While mentioning the use of PPE, the JSA sheet does not specify the exact job task steps for which the use of the PPE is required.

Therefore, from this information and information contained in the MMS report on the subject accident, the following are recommended:

1. The importance of following task procedures resulting from pre-job JSA's, whether verbal and/or written, should be stressed to all company and contractor employees.
2. JSA's should be formalized to the extent that the specific task step(s) for which procedures have been formulated are clearly stated and associated with those procedures.

For details of the accident, see [OCS Report MMS 2004-004](#). Copies of the report may be obtained from the MMS Public Information Office located at 1201 Elmwood park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123 (1-800-200-GULF or local 504-736-2519).

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