

Saved by a safety harness

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By RAY LANE / KING 5 News

SEATTLE – It was a frightening fall for a construction worker on top of the new City Hall in downtown Seattle.

He slipped on a steel beam and was left dangling some 60 feet in the air by his safety harness, which is credited with saving his life.

Rescue crews from Seattle Fire Department's Station 10 responded to the call.

Many people walking around downtown or sitting outside on a coffee break heard the commotion and then saw the worker dangling.



"I heard a noise, saw the helmet bouncing down the street, and then I looked up and saw this man hanging, spinning wildly, with a look on his face that he was very unhappy to be there," said passerby, Penny Gudgel. "When we heard the clanging of the helmet and the equipment hitting the beams, we all looked over there and saw him hanging there and thought, 'Oh My God!'" said another witness, Gail Conrad.

The fire department said the worker's safety harness prevented him from falling to his death.

"He was in his safety harness and he slipped, and that safety harness and those lines saved his life," said Helen Fitzpatrick, spokesperson of the Seattle Fire Department.

On the eighth floor of the current City Hall, workers looked out their windows to see the man floating in the air, thankful he was strapped in to that harness.

Just by chance, city attorney Rebecca Earnest, who was working in the current City Hall and witnessed the incident, has worked on a case involving the death of a worker who was not wearing the safety equipment when he fell.

She was happy to see a better outcome this time around..

"Ironworkers wear that safety gear because now and then someone falls," she said. "That's the whole point of that gear, is that sometimes accidents happen." KING **The worker was dangling some 60 feet above the ground.** KING **The fire department helped rescue the worker.**

