

# OSHA inspector's drive-by results in six-figure fine

A random coincidence has resulted in a costly fine for a Lancaster County construction firm. OSHA cited Quality Stone Veneers for eight safety violations after an OSHA inspector noticed substandard scaffolding when he drove by a residential construction site.

Topping the list was a willful violation citation for failing to implement a fall-arrest system or provide guardrails for employees working on a scaffold more than 10 feet high.

The inspection also uncovered three repeat violations, including not placing enough planking on the scaffold, providing unsafe access to scaffold platforms and failing to provide competent supervision of scaffolding construction and movement.

In 2011, OSHA cited Quality Stone Veneers for those same violations at a West Virginia construction site.

The inspection also uncovered three serious violations, all related to faulty scaffolding procedures.

The total tab for this drive-by inspection: \$154,440.

**Note:** The chances of an OSHA inspector driving by your residential construction site are about the same as being struck by lightning. Quality Stone Veneers was zapped anyway.

*The lesson learned:* It may be difficult to train far-flung construction crews in the fine points of workplace safety, but OSHA's view is that there's no excuse for failing to train managers to enforce safety procedures.

Use every failed OSHA inspection as a signal to conduct an after-action review. Catalog the violations and incorporate corrective measures into supervisory training at all your job sites. It's the best way to limit repeat violations that can cost an employer big bucks.