



Bruins 3, Penguins 4, Final

Company cited after woman critically injured in North End by falling metal

By [Travis Andersen](#), [John R. Ellement](#) and [Matt Rocheleau](#) Globe Staff , Updated July 26, 2019, 8:16 p.m.



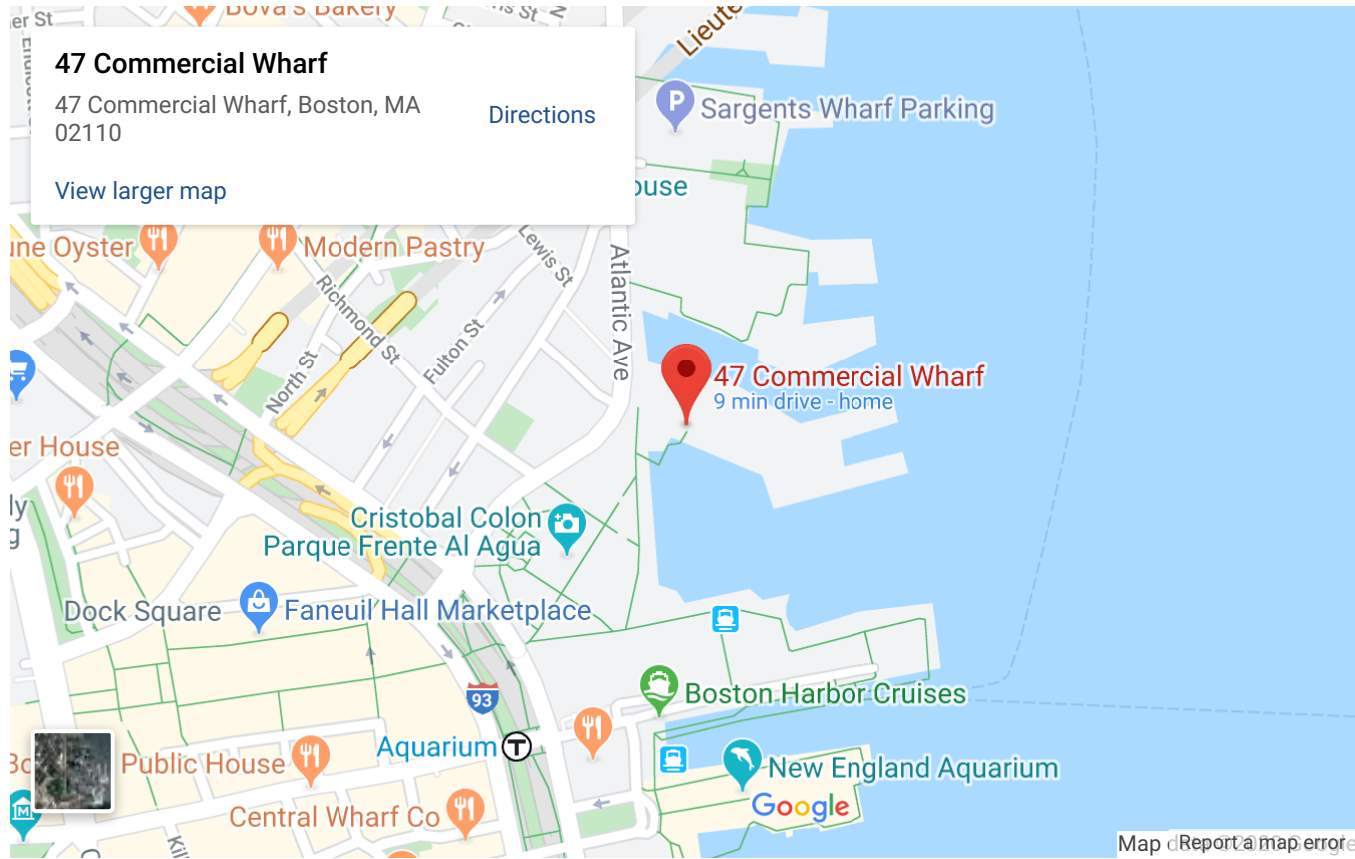
An overall view where police investigated the scene where debris fell from a structure and struck a woman in the North End on Thursday. NIC ANTAYA FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Boston city officials on Friday cited a contractor at a North End construction site where a woman was struck by a falling metal railing and [seriously injured](#), alleging the company was conducting work without proper permits and creating “an unsafe and dangerous” environment.

In a statement, the Boston Inspectional Services Department said it had halted work at the site and others where the contractor was working. The city identified the company as Corolla Contracting, which has an office in Winthrop.

The woman, who has not been publicly identified but is believed to be in her 30s, was struck Thursday morning by the metal railing when it apparently was dislodged as a crane was shifting a pallet of construction material onto the roof of a five-story condo building at 47 Commercial Wharf East on Atlantic Avenue. She [remains in critical condition](#) at a local hospital.

Witnesses said the woman was walking with her husband and a dog at the time of the 8:28 a.m. incident.



The city's Inspectional Services Department said in its statement that a permit was issued to the company on May 30 for the removal and replacement of a rubber roof at 47 Commercial Wharf East on Atlantic Avenue, but that additional work that had not been approved was also done.

“The work currently being done at 47 Commercial Wharf East exceeds the terms of the permit issued by ISD,” the statement said. “The permit issued allows for the removal and replacement of a rubber roof, however building inspectors noted that a deck was removed without the proper permits. Additionally, violations were issued for failing to indicate the placement of lumber on the permit application. These violations led to the operation of an unsafe and dangerous worksite.”

ISD also said it has “issued a stop work order for 47 Commercial Wharf East, in addition to six additional worksites currently supervised by Corolla Contracting. Each site will be inspected to ensure they are properly contained until further notice.”

An ISD spokeswoman said Corolla is not facing any fines as a result of the violations.

The state’s Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation said Friday evening that the crane operator was properly licensed at the time of the incident.

The matter remains under investigation by Boston police, Sergeant Detective John Boyle said.

A lawyer for Corolla Contracting had issued a statement Thursday evening, before ISD announced the violations, noting that it was one of two companies at the site.

“Everyone at Corolla Contracting, Inc. is profoundly saddened by today’s accident and send their sympathy to the woman injured and to her family. The company will continue to fully cooperate with the investigation of this tragic accident,” the statement said.

Attempts to reach Corolla Contracting Friday were not successful.

Messages left with an attorney representing the Commercial Wharf East Condominium Association late Friday afternoon were not immediately returned.

OSHA records showed that Corolla Contracting Inc. has been cited for eight safety violations since 2010. One was marked in the records as “deleted.”

Among the seven others, five were classified as serious. Four of the violations were related to improperly protecting employees from falling, records show. The company was also fined \$1,700 for a ladder violation in 2013, and \$1,000 for not properly training employees to prevent falls in 2017.

In all, the company was fined nearly \$39,000, but the penalties were ultimately reduced to \$13,100, records show.

Marc Bianco, chief operating officer for United Alliance Services Corporation, a workplace safety consulting firm, said Corolla Contracting Inc.'s track record of OSHA violations raises a red flag.

The frequency of violations indicated that the company was on OSHA's radar and as a result may have been more likely to be visited by inspectors, he said. The tally does not include violations the company may face from Thursday's incident.

Bianco said many companies would rather pay fines than improve their safety measures.

"The fines and penalties that OSHA imposes on these contractors is often not enough to get these companies to move off center," Bianco said. "It's often cheaper to play catch me if you can."

Some 237 workplace deaths were attributed to a person being "struck by falling object or equipment — other than [a] powered vehicle" in 2017, according to the most recent available Bureau of Labor Statistics data provided by the National Safety Council.

That accounted for about 4.6 percent of all workplace deaths recorded that year, the data show.

Another 45,940 injuries were attributed to the same cause in 2017, accounting for about 5.2 percent of all workplace injuries that year, the data show.

Globe correspondent Sarah Wu and Danny McDonald of the Globe staff contributed to this report. Travis Andersen can be reached at travis.andersen@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@TAGlobe](https://twitter.com/TAGlobe). John R. Ellement can be reached at ellement@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@JREbosglobe](https://twitter.com/JREbosglobe). Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele)

 [Show 44 comments](#)

©2020 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC