

# FATALGRAM 16-02

Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development  
Division of Labor & Safety Standards  
Occupational Safety & Health



**Date of incident:** September 30, 2016

**Industry:** Construction

**Location:** Anchorage, Alaska

**Description of Accident:** A 24-year-old worker suffered asphyxiation from a collapsing masonry retaining wall during demolishing work. A 29 foot section of the 5 foot tall masonry wall crushed the worker after he removed wooden stairways and railing. The collapsed wall trapped the victim underneath and efforts to aid him were unsuccessful. The wall had suffered long-term water and earthquake damage. The stairway being demolished by the victim at the time of the collapse was the main support for the wall section. No bracing or supports were in place during the demolition and no survey was conducted by a competent person prior to the start of the project to determine structural stability of the building and adjacent structures.

## **Accident Prevention Recommendations:**

- Ensure that a competent person conducts a survey of structures prior to the beginning of demolition activities.
- Ensure that structures that have been damaged by fire, flood or other cause are properly braced or shored before demolition operations begin.
- Ensure that earth being supported by retaining walls is properly braced or underpinned before demolishing adjacent structures.
- Ensure that employees are instructed on the hazards present in their workplace as well as in the safety regulations, which pertain to the work being conducted.