

Toolbox Talk: Fall Causes and Prevention in Construction

Introduction

Falls are one of the leading causes of workplace injuries and deaths in construction, but they can be prevented. The best way to stay safe from falls is to actively avoid them. Let's review some common fall hazards and how to prevent them effectively.

Ladders

1. Selection: Always choose the right ladder for the job. Ensure it is the appropriate size and securely tied off.
2. Inspection: Inspect the ladder before use to ensure it is in good condition.
3. Climbing: Face the ladder when climbing and avoid carrying tools in your hands. Use a hand line or tool pouch for carrying items. Never stand on the top two steps.

Scaffolds

1. Construction: Never build a temporary scaffold haphazardly. Treat it as if it's for long-term use.
2. Components: Install all vertical and horizontal cross braces and ensure the scaffold is on a level surface and fully decked.
3. Access: Provide proper access to the working platforms.

Stairways

1. Pace: Don't rush. Running up or down stairs increases the risk of falls.
2. Visibility: Avoid carrying objects that obstruct your view of the steps.
3. Use Handrails: Always use handrails when available.
4. Maintenance: Keep stairways clear of tools, materials, trash, and other tripping hazards.

Floor Openings

1. Coverage: Cover all floor openings that are 12 inches across or larger with strong, secure covers or guardrails.
2. Guardrails: If using guardrails, ensure they meet OSHA's strength requirements (OSHA Standard 1926.500).
3. Toe boards: Use toe boards to prevent tools or materials from falling through and hitting workers below.

Housekeeping

1. Clean Worksite: Maintain a clean job site to provide secure footing and prevent falls. Remove trash, debris, oil, and water from walkways and stairs.
2. Safety First: Good housekeeping is essential for a safe work environment.



Figure 1 Guardrails should be used around floor openings



Figure 2 Plywood hole cover

Summary of Main Points

- Ladders: Use the correct ladder, inspect it, and follow safe climbing practices.
- Scaffolds: Build them properly with all required components and ensure safe access.
- Stairways: Avoid rushing, use handrails, and keep stairways clear.

- Floor Openings: Cover or guard floor openings and use toe boards to prevent falls.
- Housekeeping: Keep the work area clean to ensure safe footing.

Stay Alert and Safe

Watch out for slippery surfaces, especially in winter conditions with frost, snow, and ice. Always be vigilant and proactive in preventing fall hazards.

By following these guidelines, we can significantly reduce the risk of falls and ensure a safer workplace for everyone.

SAFETY TRAINING SIGN IN SHEET

TRAINING TITLE	Fall Causes and Prevention in Construction		
DATE & TIME		LOCATION	
COMPANY		TRAINER	

NAME	SIGNATURE	PHONE