

Three Simple Steps to Prevent Falls

PLAN ahead to get the job done safely

When working from heights, employers must plan projects to ensure that the job is done safely. Begin by deciding how the job will be done, what tasks will be involved, and what safety equipment may be needed to complete each task.

When estimating the cost of a job, employers should include safety equipment, and plan to have all the necessary equipment and tools available at the construction site. For example, in a roofing job, think about all of the different fall hazards, such as holes or skylights and leading edges, then plan and select fall protection suitable to that work, such as personal fall arrest systems (PFAS).

PROVIDE the right equipment

Workers who are six feet or more above lower levels are at risk for serious injury or death if they should fall. To protect these workers, employers must provide fall protection and the right equipment for the job, including the right kinds of ladders, scaffolds, and safety gear.

Use the right ladder or scaffold to get the job done safely. For roof work, if workers use personal fall arrest systems (PFAS), provide a harness for each worker who needs to tie off to the anchor. Make sure the PFAS fits, and regularly inspect it for safe use.

TRAIN everyone to use the equipment safely

Every worker should be trained on proper set-up and safe use of equipment they use on the job. Employers must train workers in recognizing hazards on the job.



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Fall Protection

Special Emphasis Program



TOSHA

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Tennessee OSHA's Special Emphasis Program on Occupational Fall Protection

Tennessee OSHA (TOSHA) has a special emphasis program on fall hazards. The program is designed to identify and eliminate fall hazards in the workplace. On each inspection or consultative services visit, TOSHA compliance officers and consultants will evaluate fall hazards and intervene where employees are exposed to fall hazards. In addition,

What Standards Apply?

Fall protection is addressed in specific standards for general industry in 29 CFR Part 1910. In general industry, workers must be protected when the fall hazard is greater than **four** feet. Construction fall hazards are addressed in 29 CFR Part 1926. Generally, workers in construction must be protected when the fall hazard is greater than **six** feet. Subpart M of the construction standards is devoted to fall hazards and fall protection. Employees working from scaffolds or engaged in steel erection must comply with specific fall protection requirements in those standards.

Where Do Fall Hazards Exist?

Falls from roofs and ladders account for the majority of falls. Skylights along with roof and floor openings

are also common fall hazards, especially in the construction industry. Fall hazards that occur in industrial settings may be less obvious than those that occur on construction sites, but falls from even short distances can be fatal. In an industrial workplace fall hazards can occur from storage areas above offices and on mezzanines, catwalks, floor holes and manholes, scaffolds, certain material handling equipment, elevated work platforms, and even from employees climbing onto equipment to make a repair or adjustment.

Fall hazards are present during almost all phases of construction work. All trades may be exposed to fall hazards at some point during the performance of their work. Excavation, steel erection, concrete forming and pouring, work from scaffolds, and roofing are examples of work where fall hazards may be present.



Preventing Falls

Workers at all worksites must be protected from falls. The first step is identifying the fall hazards on every job. Following identification the hazards must be eliminated and the employees protected. Protection can be provided through the use of various methods and materials, including the following:

- Guard rail systems
- Personal fall arrest equipment (body harness, lanyard, etc.)
- Controlled access zones
- Safety nets
- Proper use of ladders

It is the employer's responsibility to protect employees from hazards, including falls, on the job. Therefore, the employer must provide the appropriate fall protection equipment, train the employees to use it, and enforce the use.

