

Toolbox



TALKS

Fall Protection

Recognizing the Hazard

Falls are the leading cause of death in construction. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that fall protection be provided at elevations of 4 feet in general industry workplaces, 5 feet in shipyards, 6 feet in the construction industry and 8 feet in long-shoring operations. In addition, OSHA requires that fall protection be provided when working over dangerous equipment and machinery, regardless of the fall distance.

Questions to Ask

- Are there unprotected areas where employees might fall and be injured?
- Is there a guard over floor holes or at floor openings which a worker can accidentally walk into?
- Are the areas below the fall hazard been designated as a “Do Not Enter” area when inside a building?
- Are the work edges that are over 6 feet protected against possible falls?
- Are the installers of the fall protection railing systems being properly tied off?
- Have the guard-railing systems been installed properly?
- If the fall hazard potentially exists, do you have the proper equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), or method to protect the exposure?
- Have all employees been notified about these potential fall hazards?
- If your need to use personal fall arrest systems, (PAFS) such as harnesses, harness lines, and anchoring systems, has the equipment been inspected?
- Have the employees using PAFS equipment been properly trained, with documentation?
- Have non-essential workers been instructed to keep clear of the recognized fall hazard work area(s)?

Controlling the Hazard

- Inspect the jobsite for possible fall hazards or conditions.
- Inspect the PAFS and hardware before you use it.
- Use a railing and toe-board or a floor hole cover.
- Provide a guardrail, mid-rail, and toe-board around every elevated open-sided platform, floor or runway.
- Regardless of height, if a worker can fall into or onto dangerous machines or equipment, guardrails, mid-rail, and toe-boards are to be present to prevent workers from falling.
- Other fall protection that may be required on certain jobs includes safety harnesses and lines, safety nets, stair railings and hand rails.
- Select and provide required PPE at no cost to workers, including PAFS and hardware.
- Train workers about fall hazards at the jobsite in a language that they can understand.
- Planning to control fall hazards before work begins is critical for determining the best methods and equipment for protecting workers during construction activities at the jobsite and heights of 6 feet or over.
- Having an emergency response plan will identify necessary emergency response training and critical resources (e.g., trained on-site fall arrest rescue team and rescue equipment).

Date of Safety Talk _____

Company _____

Talk given by _____

Signature _____

Attending Employees:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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Notes:

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