



Weekly Safety Meetings

Safety Training for the Construction Industry

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Select Edition

San Diego Services

Fall Causes

DECEMBER WEEK 1

When we think about falls many of us automatically envision falling from a great height. This kind of fall is, of course, very dangerous and most often fatal, and we need to take every precaution to prevent such an occurrence. Today however, our safety meeting will concentrate on the common, everyday hazards that cause slips, trips and falls on the jobsite. Let's review some of the circumstances that can cause falls and the measures you should be taking to reduce the number of slips, trips, and falls on this job.

Tripping hazards exist all over construction sites. You must be alert and keep safety in mind at all times. Start by watching where you're going, especially when you're carrying materials that obscure your forward vision. Additionally, don't create tripping hazards and eliminate any you find. Tripping over a misplaced hose can result in a lot of misery. Keep air and water hoses, welding leads, and welding hoses out of traffic areas. Never place extension cords in passageways; string them overhead and out of the way. Keep aisles, walkways, stairs, and work fabrication areas clean and clear. Pick up and dispose of scrap materials properly. Don't leave tools lying around where someone might stumble over them. Clean up water, grease, and oil spills promptly. Always guard floor holes and wall openings.

When using a ladder or getting on or off equipment remember to maintain three points of contact; two hands firmly gripping the side or handrails with one foot on the rung or step, or both feet on the rungs or steps and one hand on the rail. Avoid jumping off of a piece of equipment. Never use a chair or a box as a substitute for a ladder.

Weather also contributes to slips and falls. When placing a ladder after a rain or snowfall be sure you have a firm, solid footing. Rain, mud, frost, snow, and ice are particularly hazardous on walkways, stairs, ladder rungs, equipment steps and scaffolding; make sure they are clean and safe. A good pair of work boots will provide better traction in inclement weather, reducing the possibility of slipping. In cold weather, gloves offer both warmth and protection but keep in mind that your grip may not be quite as tight or secure when you reach for support.

Plain old common sense and good housekeeping are definitely factors that reduce falls, but your awareness and **your** recognition of safety hazards are the most important factors in preventing slips, trips and falls.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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No one is exempt from a slip, trip or fall.

Be alert and be safe.

NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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San Diego Services

Aerial Lifts & Elevated Platforms

DECEMBER WEEK 2

Aerial lifts and elevated platforms provide you with a quick, easy way to access elevated work areas. Used safely, they increase efficiency and reduce costs; unsafe use can result in serious accidents and death. Some of the hazards associated with aerial lifts include tipping over, falls, and electrocution. Knowing and observing safety rules can keep these hazards from causing accidents, injuries, and costly damage.

Lift operators must be trained by a qualified person who is experienced with the particular lift model being used. Training should include the types of hazards associated with aerial lifts, safeguards for dealing with these hazards, manufacturer's instructions, and hands-on training.

Before using an aerial lift always inspect it to ensure that it is operating properly. Check for fuel or hydraulic leaks. Check all controls and safety switches. Be certain that the tires are properly inflated and in good condition. Once you are satisfied that the lift can be operated safely, look over the area in which it will be used. Make note of holes, drop offs, bumps, debris, overhead obstructions, and power lines.

When operating a lift remember these general safety rules:

- Wear a safety harness at all times.

- Attach your harness to the designated anchor point on the platform.
- Do not sit, stand, or climb on the guardrails to reach your work area.
- Never use a ladder on a lift to extend your reach.
- Keep arms and legs inside while raising and lowering the platform.
- Position the boom parallel to the line of travel when moving the lift.
- Never drive a lift with the outriggers extended.
- Do not allow ground personnel in areas around or under the platform when it is raised.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's maximum weight capacity.
- Do not use an aerial lift as a substitute for a crane or forklift.

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SAFETY REMINDER

Always check instruction, caution, and warning labels for machine-specific safety information.

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Preventing Deadly Falls

DECEMBER WEEK 3

Every year, hundreds of workers die as a result of falls. These deadly falls involve workers falling from roofs, ladders, stairs, steps, moving vehicles, and even falling on the same level. Consider what these statistics reveal about fatal falls. You're exposed to fall hazards whether you're climbing a ladder, working on a roof, or even walking down the stairs.

Falls continue to be the leading cause of death in the construction industry. In the last 10 years, the percentage of fatalities has remained nearly the same. Subpart M (starting at 29 CFR 1926.500) of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration Standards addresses fall protection requirements for the construction industry. Take time to familiarize yourself with these regulations and how to put them into practice; then make fall protection a priority during all construction activities.

Keep in mind that anytime you are exposed to a fall of 6 feet or more to any walking or working surface below (whether it's the ground, a floor, or some other surface), you must use fall protection. The most common fall protection systems are: guardrail systems, personal fall-arrest systems, and safety net systems.

Consider some fatal fall headlines:

- 5 fall, 2 hurt in construction site collapse.
- 24-year-old plumber died when he fell through an unguarded skylight.

- 18-year-old sheet metal helper falls to his death.
- Son sees father fall to his death while jacking a tower crane.
- 23-year-old ironworker falls 85 feet off a steel beam to his death.
- 39-year-old electrician's helper falls through a domed skylight to a concrete floor 16 feet below.
- 21-year-old laborer died after falling 27 feet.
- Son watches as 51-year-old father falls to his death.

This is just a tiny sampling of deadly falls in construction during the past decade. Many—and perhaps all—of these deaths could have been prevented. Stop for a minute and consider how many times you've seen someone fall on a jobsite. That person may have been hurt or killed. You've probably witnessed the dangers of falls first-hand.

When you select or set up a fall protection system, make certain that it is set up, connected, and working properly. Don't become a "Deadly Falls" headline or statistic.

SAFETY REMINDER

A fall protection system will protect you only if you use it correctly. Learn how to use each system properly. If you're unsure, ask questions.

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Slips And Spills

DECEMBER WEEK 4

It's happened to most of us. You're walking around a jobsite, doing your work, not looking where you're going, and the next thing you know, you're flat on your back because you slipped on something. If you were in a lot of pain, you probably called for help. But if it was a minor slip, you probably looked up, embarrassed, wondering if anyone was looking, dusted yourself off, and moved on. Often, workers don't report these incidents, so no one discusses how to avoid them. Instead of ignoring the problem, we should focus on preventing and reducing slips that can lead to injuries.

Slips occur when a person's upper body is not adequately positioned over the lower body. Various factors can contribute to a slip: environmental factors can include slippery floors, worn shoes, and water or oil spills on floors; human factors include inattention, poor or obstructed vision, and inadequate lighting. All of these hazards can be controlled to prevent accidents that could lead to serious injuries.

Spills of any kind—oil, water, dirt, grease, or any other materials—should be cleaned up and disposed of immediately. When you see a spill, clean it up, even if you didn't create it. Whenever possible, correct the source of the hazard. Do your part by keeping your work area free from slipping hazards. Use funnels when dispensing petroleum

products from one container to another. Don't overfill fuel tanks and vessels. Nails, nuts, bolts, and other small, round objects can make your feet skate in one direction while your upper body goes in another direction. To avoid these skate hazards, keep a small bucket in your work area to collect small cutoffs of copper pipe, conduit, and other small objects as you work.

Another important factor in avoiding slips is to keep your eyes on your path. Be observant; watch for objects and materials along your route. Make sure walking surfaces are adequately illuminated. If it's been raining, snowing, or if it's muddy outside, watch your step indoors and outdoors and report slippery surfaces immediately. Watch for signs and cones indicating slip hazards. Wearing appropriate slip-resistant safety footwear can also reduce slips. You can further prevent slips by simply holding on to stair railings as you move up or down a stairway. Should you slip or stumble, you can hold the railing firmly to steady yourself or to get your balance back. When it comes to slips, embarrassment should be the least of your concerns. Think about safety every step of the day.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Medication can also contribute to slips. Read medication labels to see if they can affect your balance or vision.

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