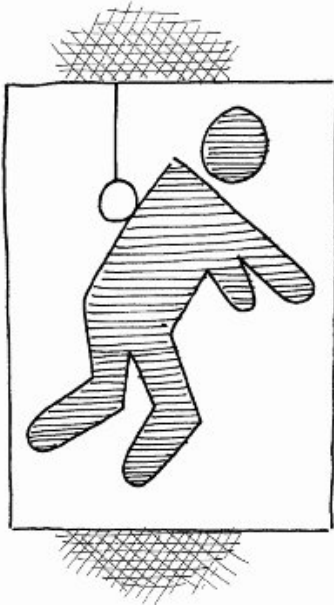


Fall Protection Overview

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Falls are the leading cause of construction worker fatalities. Each year between 150 and 200 workers die and more than 100,000 are injured as a result of falls at construction sites. Special trade contractors, such as roofers, carpenters, and structural steel erectors, accounted for half of the fatal falls. Knowing and implementing the following rules will help protect you from such a fall.



Who does the rule apply to?

The fall protection rule covers most construction workers. OSHA exempts those who inspect, investigate, or assess workplace conditions prior to the actual start of work or after all work is done. This is because their exposure to fall hazards are for very short durations, if at all.

The rule identifies areas or activities where fall protection is needed. These include: (1) ramps, runways, and other walkways, (2) excavations, (3) hoist areas, (4) holes, (5) formwork and reinforcing steel, (6) leading edge work, (7) unprotected sides and edges, (8) overhand bricklaying and related work, (9) roofing work, (10) precast concrete erection, (11) wall openings, (12) residential construction, and (13) other walking/working surfaces.

What is threshold height?

Threshold height is that height where your employer must provide fall protection for the areas or activities described above. For this fall protection rule that height is six feet. At that height your employer must provide the equipment and training required to protect you from falling off, onto, or through working levels that are six feet or more above lower levels.

Selection of equipment

Under the fall protection rule, employers can select fall protection measures and equipment to fit the type of work you are doing. The three most common methods of providing fall protection are guardrails, safety nets, or personal fall arrest systems.

Training

Your employer must provide training, taught by a competent person, any time you could be exposed to fall hazards. The training must include: (1) recognizing and minimizing fall hazards, (2) procedures for erecting, maintaining, disassembling, and inspecting the fall protection equipment you will use, and (3) an understanding of the OSHA fall protection rules.

What the rule contains

The fall protection standard has three elements that are important to you. They are: (1) situations at your worksite that require protection from falling (1926.501), (2) different types of fall protection equipment and systems your employer can use to provide you protection (1926.502), and (3) training requirements (1926.503).

Always use all fall protection systems and equipment your employer provides, it could save your life.

This document provides general information about a safety and health topic and is only intended for use in facilitating discussions with employees in safety meetings. It does not address all hazards, OSHA or local requirements related to the topic or accompanying photograph. This document cannot be relied on to determine whether a site specific situation meets all safety and health requirements. Assurance Safety Consulting is not responsible for any health and safety violation or injury at a job site.