

ZRS Safety Huddle Guide

Fall Prevention – Working from Heights, Ladders and Low-Height Falls

Why this matters

- Fall exposures less than 6' are often overlooked, but can result in serious injury or fatalities.
- Ladders are a top 3 cited OSHA violation
- 81% of construction site fall injuries requiring a hospital/clinic visit involve a ladder.
 - Approximately 40% of all fatal falls in last 10 years involved the use of a ladder. Average of 160 fatalities related to ladder use.
 - Over 22K ladder-related injuries that resulted in lost time.
- Head injuries are common outcome of falls, particularly during low-height and ladder fall incidents and can result in TBI's and permanent disability.
- Improper set up and positioning account for over 40% of extension ladder incidents.
- Fall exposures less than 6' are often overlooked, but can result in serious injury or fatalities.
- Preventing falls – regardless of height-requires planning, proper equipment selection and active and engaged supervision.

Lessons Learned

Have you experienced a near miss or accident?

Examples below:

- Employee fell 5' from scaffolding platform without railings and had missing planks. Resulted in severe injuries and permanent disability and nuclear verdict of over \$40M.
- Worker fell from ladder at height less than 6' and struck head directly resulting in TBI and permanent disability.
- A worker performing structural framing work lost balance while standing on a top plate/rim board less than 6 feet above the lower level, fell backward, and struck the head on the deck below, resulting in critical injury.
- During scaffold erection, a worker fell approximately 4–5 feet from an incomplete scaffold platform while stepping between frames where guardrails and fall protection were not yet installed. The worker struck their head on the deck below; the incident highlighted how Type II safety helmets with secured chin straps can help keep head protection in place and reduce the severity of blunt force head injuries during low height falls.



Best Practices

- Pre-planning process is crucial – means and methods of access work at low-heights should be reviewed and documented daily.
- Ladders should be a last resort for accessing working or accessing heights.
- Alternative means may include – scissor lifts, push lifts, scaffolding, rolling staging, rolling platform ladders or use platform/lean safe step ladders if necessary.
- When in use, ladders, lifts and equipment should be inspected daily to ensure condition and labeling.
- Ensure proper set up and use when on ladder – level stable ground, proper angle and maintain 3 points of contact when necessary.
- Require tie-off overhead when working on ladders when more than 6' from surface.
- Type II Safety helmets with chin straps secured can provide side and rear impact protection with falls from all heights.
- Barricade or control around work areas to prevent inadvertent impact by others.

Discussion

- Expectations and requirements for accessing work at heights should be clearly defined in contract agreements and reinforced prior to start of work.
- How do short-duration or routine tasks increase the risk of low-height falls?
- Observe, assess and execute – review work area, identify risks and implement proper procedures and controls.
- Do you have the right equipment on site to access the work?
 - Duty rating – total weight including person, tools & materials
 - Material – fiberglass near electricity
 - Size – working step or platform at proper height to access work.
 - Rails in place and wheels locked on rolling staging.
- Is there a permit and inspection program in place?
 - Tags on ladders/staging with daily sign off.
 - Identifying reasons for ladder use in lieu of lifts on JHAs and pre-task plans?
- How do short-duration or routine tasks increase the risk of low-height falls?

Daily safety briefings and crew huddles should identify and discuss these hazards.
The foreman and crew should develop a plan to reduce or eliminate these risks before work.

Attendance Form

Safety Meeting Sign in Sheet

Topic: _____ Date: _____

Trainer: _____ Location: _____

Print Name	Signature
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Comments/Feedback:

Contact us to learn more:

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