

safety matters

Construction
Toolbox Talks for

From your safety partners at Cool Insuring Agency, Inc.

Protecting Those Below During Overhead Work

In construction, jobs involving elevated platforms present certain hazards that can threaten worker safety, injure people and damage property below. If this happens, the contractor working the job is responsible for the damages. That's why it is extremely important when working on an elevated platform that you use the proper precautions to keep yourself and those around you safe from unnecessary injury.

Establish a Safe Area

If possible, overhead work should never be performed over anyone.

- Section off the hazard area with signage and some form of barricade to clear the area and prevent traffic from moving underneath the work zone.
- Use proper personal protective equipment, such as a hard hat, if you need to enter the hazard area while work is being performed.
- If parking is allowed in the area, set up signage in advance. This will prevent unattended vehicles from being in your way when it comes time to work on the project.
- If a hazard area cannot be established under an overhead workspace use debris nets, catch platforms or canopies to protect people and property from possible falling objects.

Securing Tools

Anything dropped from an elevation can be a potential hazard to those below. Even

personal items like cellphones can turn into harmful projectiles. Make sure these items are accounted for by:

- Connecting all tools to a safety cable to prevent accidental drops
- Using a holster or sheath and a safety line to hold your cell phone, pager and any similar devices
- Inspecting all safety cables for proper function before starting work each day
- Using toeboards to prevent stray materials from accidentally being bumped off an elevated platform

Securing Yourself

Not only can you be gravely injured in a fall but you can also injure others. Make sure you take steps to manage your own falling risks.

- Wear a body belt as part of a tethering or restraint system with a lanyard attached to the work platform.
- Never climb or sit on guardrails.
- Never exceed the recommended weight limit of scaffolding or other lifts.

Safety Through Scheduling

The risks of a job can be reduced if the job is done when the risks are not present. One of the best ways to avoid damage to persons or property below is to find the appropriate time to schedule work. Try to avoid peak times by contacting the location to find out when foot traffic is low.

Combining safety precautions with appropriate scheduling can go a long way in reducing the risks involved with overhead work.

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