



RISK REMINDER

PARTNERING WITH TOWNSHIPS

Fall Protection for Construction

In construction work, falls are the leading cause of 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. The fall protection rule deals with both employee and equipment issues in protecting workers from falls.

Employers need to:

- Select systems and equipment appropriate for the situation.
- Provide appropriate supervision (Competent Person) who is charged with implementing the Fall Protection Plan.
- Properly construct and install safety systems.
- Train workers in the proper selection, use and maintenance of fall protection systems.

Who does the rule apply to?

The general construction fall protection rule (29 CFR 1926, Subpart M) covers most construction workers except those inspecting, investigating, or assessing workplace conditions prior to the actual start of work or after all work is done.

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.

Employees need to:

- Use safe work practices.
- Use fall protection equipment properly.
- Always wear provided fall protection equipment.

What is the threshold height?

The rule sets a uniform threshold height of six feet. This means you must protect your employees from fall hazards whenever an employee is working six feet or more above a lower level.

Selection of Equipment

Employers can select fall protection measures and equipment compatible with the type of work being performed. Fall protection can generally be provided through the use of a guardrail, safety net, personal fall arrest positioning device, controlled access zones, and warning line systems.



I COULD HAVE SAVED A LIFE

I didn't want to seem a fool,
Or argue over a safety rule,
I knew he'd done the job before,
If I called it wrong, he might get sore.

The chances didn't seem that bad,
I've done the same, he knew I had.
So I shook my head and walked on by,
He knew the risks as well as I.

He took the chance, I closed my eye,
And with that act, I let him die.
I could have saved a life that day,
But I chose to look the other way.

Now every time I see his wife,
I'll know, I could have saved his life.
That guilt is something I must bear,
But it isn't something you need to share.

If you see a risk that others take,
That puts their health or life at stake,
The question asked, or thing you say,
Could help them live another day.

If you see a risk and walk away,
Then hope you never have to say,
"I could have saved a life that day,
But I chose to look the other way."

Don Merrel
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