



Roofing and Falls

Falls are the leading cause of fatalities in construction. In 2014, there were 359 fatal falls to a lower level in the construction industry. All of those deaths were preventable.

If you are involved in roofing operations, controlling fall hazards should be your biggest concern. Before you even put your foot on the bottom rung of the ladder, ask yourself: "Do I understand all of the fall hazards and can I work today without falling?"

Every time you're doing roofing work, remember to:

- **Inspect your personal fall arrest system (PFAS).** Check each component. If you find any damage or deficiencies, report them to your supervisor. Never use damaged or worn fall protection equipment. Always tie off to marked anchorage points that have been determined to be safe. If a PFAS has been involved in a fall, it should be taken out of service until a competent person inspects it and says it's okay to use.
- **Set up ladders on stable and level surfaces.** Make sure the ladder extends three feet above the upper landing. Inspect ladders before each use. Don't use a damaged or makeshift ladder. Keep areas at the top and bottom of the ladder clear of tools and materials so you don't trip.
- **Never sit on, lean against, or step on a skylight.** The skylight may not support your weight.
- **Watch for openings.** Guard or cover all holes you have created or uncovered so other

workers don't fall through them. Report unguarded skylights and roof or floor openings.

- **Be especially careful when conditions make it more likely that you will slip and fall.** Beware of high winds, wet weather, ice, and moss. Large objects like sheets of plywood can catch the wind and pull or push you off the roof.
- **Wear safety footwear with good traction.** Make sure your boots are free from mud and grime before you climb the ladder or scaffolding to access the roof.
- **Use some form of fall protection even on low-slope roofs.** You can use a PFAS, guardrails, safety nets (though they're unusual), or a warning line system in combination with a safety monitoring system. The key point is to make sure you have some form of real fall protection in place so you don't fall. Remember that "I'll be really, really careful" and "I've never fallen off a roof before" are not acceptable forms of fall protection.

Only workers who are trained in fall protection and who understand the risks should ever be on a roof.

SAFETY REMINDER

Before getting onto the roof, check the area for overhead power lines. Consider all overhead lines energized. Keep yourself and your tools, equipment, and materials at least 10 feet away from power lines.

NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

S.A.F.E. CARDS* PLANNED FOR THIS WEEK:

REVIEWED MSDS #

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Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) happens when the median nerve in the hand and wrist is pinched or squeezed. Classic symptoms include numbness, tingling, burning, and pain in the thumb and fingers. Sometimes it can affect the whole hand, wrist, and forearm. Advanced CTS can lead to nerve and muscle damage that can affect the strength of your grip. Take a moment to imagine what could happen if you couldn't keep a firm grip on a drill or if you lost hold of a ladder rung when you were climbing.

People often think of carpal tunnel syndrome as a problem for office workers who type too much. You may not think it's a safety issue for workers on a construction site. But you could be at risk for developing CTS. Experts think that certain tasks, such as using vibrating tools or work that causes you to repeatedly flex your wrist too far forward or too far backward, can increase pressure on the median nerve and lead to CTS.

It's all well and good to say that tools and tasks should fit the worker, but sometimes the science of ergonomics doesn't seem to fit in well on a construction site. Construction work frequently requires holding or pushing on something with your hand, and some of those actions might increase your risk for developing CTS. Maybe you can find, or even create, a tool or jig that will make the job easier and reduce the strain on your wrist. If you can't, don't just give up. Talk to your supervisor. Think about changing how you do the task, where you stand, or the sequence of steps in the task, so your wrist is bent less.

Control the risk factors that you can:

- Use tools that are comfortable and fit in your hand well.
- Relax your grip—most people use more force than they need to when performing routine tasks.
- Wear gloves that aren't too tight and help improve your grip.
- Wear gloves that absorb vibration when you use tools that vibrate.
- Mix it up—change tasks to avoid using or bending your wrist the same way for too long.
- Take frequent, short breaks to stretch and rest your arms, wrists, and fingers so you avoid the cumulative effects of stress and strain.

CTS and other musculoskeletal disorders are often treated best when they are caught early. Talk with your doctor or healthcare provider if you experience symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome. Be sure to describe your work so he or she gets the full picture. Don't ignore the symptoms of CTS. If you do, you could develop permanent nerve and muscle damage that could make you very uncomfortable and possibly end your career.

SAFETY REMINDER

A full tool belt can be very heavy. All that extra weight can strain your lower back, and suspenders can cause shoulder problems. Only carry the tools you need.

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These instructions do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations.



GHS Labels

When you work with a hazardous chemical, you should never just reach for the container, pour the chemical onto a rag, and start using it. You need to understand the dangers and the risks so you know how to use that chemical safely and you don't get hurt or sick.

In 2012, OSHA adopted the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (also called GHS) as part of its revision of the Hazard Communication Standard. These easy-to-understand labels with pictograms will help you immediately recognize the hazards you are dealing with. The goal is to give you the information you need in an easier and more visible way. Every chemical has to be labeled. The label can be on the container, or sometimes it's attached to the package that the container is shipped in.

Every GHS label must contain the following six pieces of information:

- 1. A Signal Word** indicates the hazard level. The signal word "Danger" is used for the most severe hazards and "Warning" for less severe hazards.
- 2. Pictograms** are distinct symbols on white backgrounds, framed within red borders. Each pictogram represents a specific hazard and gives you a quick, visual cue. One label may include several pictograms.
- 3. Product Names or Identifiers** provide the chemical name, or an identifying number such as a code or batch number so you know what the product is.

4. Hazard Statements are phrases that describe the nature of the chemical's hazards. These statements use standardized wording. For instance, "Toxic if inhaled."

5. Precautionary Statements describe actions you need to take to minimize or prevent exposure. They tell you how to stay safe by describing what kind of PPE to wear, how to store the chemical safely, and how to provide first aid for exposure.

6. Supplier Information gives you contact information for the manufacturer or supplier of the product.

It's important to remember that the information on chemical labels is limited; it's there to remind you of the hazards. For the complete details on any hazardous chemical you use, you need to read the Safety Data Sheet (SDS). It may not be fun, but it may save your life.

Even if you've been careless in the past and haven't gotten hurt, this time may be the time when exposure to the chemical makes you sick. Anytime you use chemicals, you have to wear the right personal protective equipment. If you don't, you could lose your eyesight, burn exposed skin, or increase your risk for diseases like cancer. Read the labels so you know what the hazards are. Then get the right PPE and make sure you don't get hurt.

SAFETY REMINDER

Go home tonight and read the labels on the cleaners and other chemicals you have stored under your kitchen sink.

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10 Safety Issues for New Employees

Joining the construction industry means that you will have a lot of information to process, and not just about benefits, holidays, and getting paid; most importantly, you have to learn about your safety. Let's discuss 10 safety issues that every new employee should know about.

1. Emergencies: You need to understand emergency procedures for your jobsite before you start working. Know where the emergency muster point is and how to contact emergency services.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Be sure you know what type of PPE you need to wear for each task you'll do, and where to get that PPE. It's important that you learn how to use PPE properly or ask for help if you aren't sure. Learn the PPE requirements for each new task you do.

3. Safety Data Sheets (SDSs): There is an SDS for every hazardous chemical on the site. SDSs contain a wealth of safety and health information. You'll find PPE requirements, what to do in case of a fire or spill, and how to dispose of chemicals. They tell you how to work with hazardous chemicals without getting hurt. Find out where SDSs are kept.

4. Drinking water and portable restrooms: To stay healthy, you've got to stay hydrated. Construction work will make you sweat and you've got to replenish the water that leaves your body. Be sure to find the portable restrooms before you need them, and make sure that you wash or sanitize your hands when you're done.

5. Smoking: If you are a smoker, remember to light up only in designated areas, and never in an area where there are flammable or combustible materials. Many construction sites are now smoke-free or tobacco-free zones.

6. Safety Signs: Jobsite signs display valuable, life-saving information. It's your responsibility to read, heed, and understand every sign. If you don't understand a sign, ask your supervisor before someone gets hurt.

7. Pre-Task Plans: Your employer might require you to complete a Pre-Task Plan, a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA), or a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) before you begin certain tasks. Planning ahead will help you identify and control hazards.

8. Fire Protection and Prevention: Learn how to use a fire extinguisher and know where the nearest one is located.

9. First Aid: Find out what to do and where to go if you get hurt on the job. Report all injuries to your supervisor, no matter how small. Let your supervisor know if you hold a First-Aid, CPR, or AED certification.

10. Horseplay: Never participate in any form of horseplay. Horseplay leads to accidents, injuries, and terminations.

SAFETY REMINDER

If you're an experienced employee, help out the new workers. Remind them that it's okay to ask questions. Asking can be embarrassing, but accidents can be fatal.

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