

# Fatal Facts

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## **INCIDENT #2 - Workers fall through floor opening**

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT**

A concrete worker was killed and another was seriously injured when both fell through an open floor hole. The hole was covered with a plywood sheet that was not secured in place, marked, or otherwise identified as a hole cover. While picking up the plywood sheet-which blocked their view of the floor-the concrete workers continued walking in an attempt to stand the plywood upright, and stepped into the floor hole. They apparently thought the plywood sheets on the floor were excess material and were moving them to widen a runway for concrete buggies.

### **ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Require effective fall protection for all employees on walking and working surfaces to protect them from falling through holes (including skylights) more than six feet above lower levels (Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1926.501 (b)(4)).

Require that covers for all floor holes or openings be secured when installed to prevent accidental displacement by the wind, equipment, or employees (29 CFR 1926.502 (i)(3)).

Require that all hole or opening covers be color coded or marked with the word "HOLE," "OPENING" or "COVER" to warn of the hazard (29 CFR 1926.502 (i)(4)).

Require that covers in roadways and vehicular aisles be capable of supporting, without failure, at least twice the weight of employees, equipment, and materials that may be imposed on them at any one time (29 CFR 1926.502 (i)(2)).

Require that covers in roadways and vehicular aisles be capable of supporting, without failure, at least twice the maximum axle load of the largest vehicle expected to cross over the cover (29 CFR 1926.502 (i)(1)).

### **COMMENTARY**

Even small holes in a floor or walkway can create a trip and fall hazard if not properly covered. Ensure that your workers are trained not only to cover all holes but to RE-COVER them any time the original cover has to be removed and a hole left open for any length of time.