GBCA SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK

FALLING FROM HEIGHTS

OSHA reports that the number of deaths from the Fatal Four have steadily risen in the last decade. Falls are one of the largest contributors in construction deaths. This Toolbox Talk discusses falls from heights.

- Count to 2: 1 second … 2 seconds.
  In 2 seconds, a body will have traveled 64 feet at a speed of approximately 30 miles an hour. In 4 seconds, the body will fall 242 feet and make impact at 70 miles an hour.
- The most common factors associated with falls are risky behaviors/activities, individual characteristics, site conditions, organizational characteristics, agents (scaffolds/ladders), and weather conditions.
- Most falls are from "quick" jobs, where the victim was going to be only "a few minutes."
- Job site strategies that reduce the likelihood of falls: guard rails are in good shape, cable guides are secure and deflection is correct, cable tensioners are in place, and holes in floors or walking surfaces are covered and marked properly.
- Job site issues that increase the likelihood of falls include the following: unprotected edges, slippery or cluttered surfaces, other workers in the area causing crowding, and being unaware of other workers, the scope of their jobs, and the scope of your own job.
- Keep alert for CHANGING conditions, including weather.

Falls and related deaths affect more than just the victim: Spouses, children, parents, siblings, friends, communities, co-workers, and rescuers are all impacted. Also affected are the individuals tasked with explaining to the family why someone is not coming home due to injury or death of a worker.

Nobody goes to work saying "I'm going to fall to my death today," yet the statistics show an increase in falls.

How can you defeat this statistic? Plan on a safe day by planning a safe day.

PLAN your work, determine the potential hazards, eliminate/reduce the hazards, and above all, take no risks.