

PREVENTING FALLING OBJECTS

Falling objects are a serious hazard. Objects as small as a bolt can cause serious injury or even death when dropped from an elevated height and striking a worker below. Dropped objects can also cause significant property damage as well.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- **ELIMINATE THE HAZARD**
- **ENGINEERING CONTROLS**
- **USE REQUIRED PPE**



BC Forest Safety

Safety is **good** business

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ELIMINATE THE HAZARD

Remove objects and tools from higher levels, scaffolding or aerial lifts that don't need to be there. Removing objects that pose a hazard to people working below is the best option to prevent an object from falling and striking someone.

ENGINEERING CONTROLS

Fencing or cordoning off areas below elevated work areas will prevent people from walking into the line of fire of a dropped object. Install toe boards on elevated work areas to ensure objects and tools cannot easily slide off an edge and fall. Another engineering control is using tethers or anchors for tools and objects being used on the elevated work area.

PPE

Anytime there are overhead hazards present on a job site, hardhats are required. PPE, such as hardhats, are only one line of defense and they do not prevent an injury from occurring. Although hardhats are used to protect the head, they cannot be relied upon to eliminate the risk of a serious injury sustained from the impact of a dropped object. The best practise is to try to eliminate the hazard risk or install engineering controls to reduce the chance of objects striking people below instead of relying on PPE to lessen the blow.

REMEMBER

Consider all work areas and the tasks being completed to determine if there is a risk of falling objects. Situations like using aerial lifts or working on scaffolds, pose obvious hazards but try to identify less obvious hazards. For example, a large wrench perched on the edge of a piece of equipment with a mechanic working underneath or a hot cup of coffee on top of a file cabinet.

Paying attention to the smaller hazards will greatly improve safety at your work site and help people get home safely at the end of the day.

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