

WEEKLY SAFETY MEETING

FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

SAFETY MEETING OUTLINES Box 700, Frankfort, IL 60423 815-464-0200 No. 35 Vol. 21 Week of 8/28/2023

Company Name _____ Job Name _____ Date _____

FLOOR OPENINGS & GUARDRAILS

Unguarded floor and wall openings present serious hazards. How many times have you walked past a wall opening and thought nothing of it? Even worse, how many times have you **worked** next to an unguarded floor opening? Floor and wall openings are killers that are waiting for you on the jobsite. A large number of construction injuries result from falls to another level, and most of these injuries can be prevented.

Not long ago a laborer working on the second level of a building picked up a piece of plywood laying on the floor. The plywood was not marked "HOLE" or "COVER", nor was it nailed down. It was however, covering a hole which had been left for the HVAC system. He stepped forward as he picked it up and fell fifteen feet to the floor below.

This kind of accident can be prevented by using covers or guardrails to protect floor openings. Covers must be strong enough to support any traffic or other loads placed on them. Covers must be secured to prevent anyone from picking them up by mistake, and to keep them from moving due to vibration or traffic. They should be clearly marked so that everyone, including new employees, will instantly recognize what they are. [See 29 CFR 1926.502(i) for details on covers.]

Guardrails can also be used to protect floor and wall openings, as well as openings and platforms for ladderways and stairways. A standard guardrail consists of a top rail 42" high and a mid rail at 21". Toeboards may also be necessary to provide falling object protection. All guardrail systems must be capable of withstanding a 200-pound load applied along the top edge in any outward or downward direction. [See 29 CFR 1926.502(b) for more information about guardrails.]

Openings or platforms for ladderways and stairways require special consideration because there must be an opening in the guardrail to access the ladder or stairs. A standard railing with toeboards must be used on all sides, except the opening. The opening must be protected in one of two ways: 1) by offsetting the entrance so that a worker cannot walk straight through the entrance and down the ladder or stairs, or 2) with a swinging gate. If a gate is used, install it so that it swings away from the opening or platform.

Does your job have any death traps? Don't wait...cover or protect them now! It will take less time to protect that hole than it will to fill out the admissions paperwork at the hospital.

SAFETY REMINDER

**Stay alert, look where you're going,
notice what's around you,
and eliminate unsafe conditions!**

Special Topics For Your Project _____

Employee Safety Recommendations _____

Reviewed MSDS # _____ Subject _____

Meeting Attended By _____

Supervisor's Signature _____