Toolbox Talks

Scaffold Falls

CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR FALLS FROM UNSECURED SCAFFOLDING PLANK

While a supervisor was setting up scaffolding for an indoor project, he stopped during the set-up process to hang a piece of drywall while standing on a walk plank that had no attaching hooks and was unsecured on both ends.

While hanging the drywall, the metal wall plank that he was standing on suddenly flipped on its side, throwing him nearly 11-feet down to the ground. Tragically, he was pronounced dead at the scene.

➢ Prior to beginning work, a job hazard analysis (JHA) should be completed to determine what hazards are present and how to eliminate or minimize them.

➢ Proper scaffolding equipment should be used for each phase of work.

➢ Ensure scaffolds are fully planked or decked.

➢ When working on scaffolds use fall protection in the form of guardrail or personal fall arrest system when 10 or more feet above the lower level of scaffolding.

OSHA Standard 1926.451(g)(1) Each employee on a scaffold more than 10 feet above a lower level shall be protected from falling to that lower level.

WORKER FALLS 35-FEET FROM SCAFFOLD AFTER CONTACT WITH POWER LINE

Working for a solar energy company, a worker was standing on a scaffold while lifting a 20-foot (20 pound) aluminum bracket from the ground. When the metal bracket reached the top of the scaffold, he pulled it to a horizontal position causing it to make contact with high-voltage electrical lines that were about 10-feet away.

He was shocked and fell from the scaffold about 35-feet to the ground below. He was immediately transferred to the hospital but died from his injuries the next day.

➢ When working near power lines, all workers must be trained on safety procedures and requirements.

➢ Always survey the site for overhead power lines.

➢ Outdoor workers on scaffolds should conduct a daily job hazard analysis of the work area and include any electrical hazards and power lines nearby.

➢ When considering the safety distance between the scaffold and the nearest power line, account for the length of any tools or equipment that will be used.

➢ Inspect scaffolds before each work shift. Any damaged scaffold or component should be immediately repaired, replaced, or removed from service.

NOVICE DRYWALL INSTALLER FALLS FROM MOBILE SCAFFOLD

An inexperienced drywall installer was working with a lead worker as a two-man crew. They set up a mobile scaffold to a height of 7-feet which was placed 1-foot away from the wall. The lead worker locked the wheels on his end and then they both climbed the scaffold to hang the sheetrock.

The installer was holding the sheetrock against the wall when the scaffold suddenly moved backward causing him to lose his balance and fall. He hit his head on the concrete floor, was taken to the hospital, but sadly died of his injuries two days later.

➢ After setting up a mobile scaffold, check that it is on a hard level surface, properly braced and secured so it does not sway, set closely to the wall where work is to be performed, and the wheels are locked.
➢ Guardrails and toe guards are only required when scaffolds are 10-feet or more above the ground (or lower level). This incident demonstrates that falls from less than 10-feet can still cause fatal injuries. Consider the use of guardrails at lower heights to minimize risk.

Safety Topic:	Date/Time:
Facilitator:	Location:

Name	Signature	

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