



# Toolbox Talks

## Falling Objects



Falling objects, like tools, materials, or debris, can expose workers to minor injuries like cuts and abrasions, but can also cause more serious injuries like puncture wounds or concussions. In some cases, especially if workers are not wearing hard hats, a dropped object can result in hospitalization or even a fatal injury.

OSHA Standards very specifically state that workers must have protection from falling objects. **When workers are exposed to falling object hazards, they must wear head protection** and at least one of the following safety measures must be implemented:

1. Erect toeboards, screens, or a guardrail system to prevent falling objects.
2. Erect a canopy structure to prevent falling objects.
3. Barricade the area below where objects could fall.

Additional precautions that may help prevent falling object hazards:

- Workers should always wear hard hats when work is being performed overhead, or there is any risk of falling objects in the area.
- Secure all tools and materials to prevent them from falling on people below. Unless items are being used for work in progress, keep all tools and materials at least 3 feet from any leading edges.
- Ensure toeboards are in place; inspect frequently.
- Do not hang or drape any items over guardrails.
- Consider using tool lanyards to prevent tools from falling.
- Stack materials securely to prevent them from sliding, falling, or collapsing.
- When working at heights do not keep any items in pockets that aren't zipped or securely closed, including items like cell phones, pens, or small tools.
- Erect barricades and post warning signs at work zones that may have falling object hazards.

