

CONSTRUCTION LABOR SERVICES, INC

THE



CONNECTION

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Am I In Danger?

Almost all sites have unprotected sides and edges, wall openings, or floor holes at some point during construction. If these sides and openings are not protected at your site, injuries from falls or falling objects may result, ranging from sprains and concussions to death.

How Do I Avoid Hazards?

- Use at least one of the following whenever employees are exposed to a fall of 6 feet or more above a lower level:
 - [Guardrail Systems](#)
 - [Safety Net Systems](#)
 - [Fall Arrest Systems](#)
- Cover or guard floor holes as soon as they are created during new construction.
- For existing structures, survey the site before working and continually audit as work continues. Guard or cover any openings or holes immediately.
- Construct all floor hole covers so they will effectively support two times the weight of employees, equipment, and materials that may be imposed on the cover at any one time.
- In general, it is better to use fall *prevention* systems, such as guardrails, than fall *protection* systems, such as safety nets or fall arrest devices, because they provide more positive safety means.



Fall Cleanup

When raking, don't bend and twist your torso. Keep your back straight, and use your arms and legs in a smooth, coordinated rocking motion.

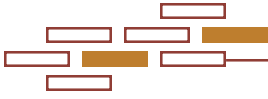
As you move the rake forward for leaves or grass clippings, shift your body weight to your front foot. As you pull the rake back, shift weight to your back foot.

Low back strain often occurs from excessive bending, stretching or twisting abruptly.

Be wise around wheelbarrows. Pushing a wheelbarrow carries special risk. With a heavy load, the wheelbarrow may abruptly shift to one side, jerking your arms and twisting your back.

Use a wheelbarrow for light loads only. For heavy loads, use a dolly and push the load.





FALL PROTECTION IS A MUST FOR WORKER SAFETY

You must provide fall protection in one of three ways *before* work begins:

- Placing guardrails around the hazard area.
- Deploying safety nets.
- Providing personal fall arrest systems for each employee.

Many times the nature and location of the work will dictate the form that fall protection takes. If the employer chooses to use a guardrail system, he must comply with the following provisions:

- Top edge height of top rails, or equivalent guardrail system members, must be between 39 and 45 inches above the walking/working level, except when conditions warrant otherwise and all other criteria are met (e.g., when employees are using stilts, the top edge height of the top rail must be increased by an amount equal the height of the stilts).
- Midrails, screens, mesh, intermediate vertical members, or equivalent intermediate structures, must be installed between the top edge and the walking/working surface when there is no wall or other structure at least 21 inches high.
 - Midrails must be midway between the top edge of the guardrail system and the walking/working level.
 - Screens and mesh must extend from the top rail to the walking/working level, and along the entire opening between rail supports.
 - Intermediate members (such as balusters) between posts must be no more than 19 inches apart.
 - Other structural members (such as additional midrails or architectural panels) must be installed so as to leave no openings wider than 19 inches.
- Guardrail systems must be capable of withstanding at least 200 pounds of force applied within 2 inches of the top edge, in any direction and at any point along the edge, and without causing the top edge of the guardrail to deflect downward to a height less than 39 inches above the walking/working level.
- Midrails, screens, mesh, and other intermediate members must be capable of withstanding at least 150 pounds of force applied in any direction at any point along the midrail or other member.
- Guardrail systems must not have rough or jagged surfaces that would cause punctures, lacerations, or snagged clothing.
- Top rails and midrails must not cause a projection hazard by overhanging the terminal posts.

Additional Information:

- [OSHA Standard: 1926.501\(b\)\(1\)](#)
- Worker Deaths by Falls: A Summary of Surveillance Findings and Investigative Case Reports. NIOSH Publication 2000-116 (2000, November).

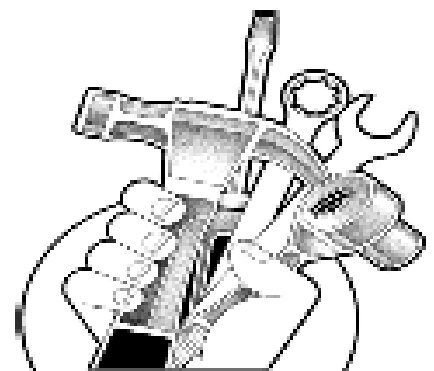
See listing on [NIOSH](#) website.

How Simple Hand Tools Can Become Deadly

Misusing a hand tool or failing to maintain it properly can lead to a terrible injury. Here are just a few examples of how tools can become dangerous:

1. Using a screwdriver as a chisel can cause the tip of the screwdriver to break and fly off, hitting the user or other employees.
2. If a wooden handle on a tool such as a hammer or an axe is loose, splintered or cracked, the head of the tool could fly off and strike the user or another worker.
3. A wrench must not be used if its jaws are sprung, because it might slip.
4. Impact tools such as chisels, wedges or drift pins are unsafe if they have mushroomed heads. The heads might shatter on impact, sending sharp fragments flying.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (616) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com