

THE

CONNECTION

FEBRUARY 2005

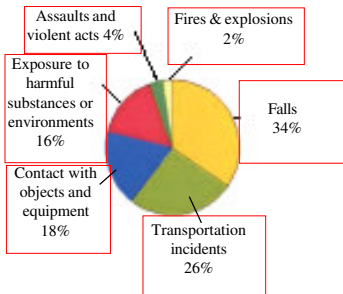


Blind To Safety

Construction has a much higher rate of eye injuries than any other industry. More than 10,600 eye injuries each year force construction workers to miss work. Nails, tiny pieces of metal, splinters, and cut wire fly in the air. Mixing of cement, sawing, grinding, and chipping produces dust and grit. So does heavy machinery moving across a site. Chemicals and welding arc can burn your eyes. If you are not careful, you can hurt your eyes or go blind. Wear the proper eyewear and safety equipment.

Distribution of Fatalities in the Construction Industry by Event in 2001

Construction Industry



Slips and Falls

An unguarded wet floor is one of the many causes that accounted for approximately 10.1 million injuries last year at work. In Michigan, 17.4 percent of all Workers Compensation cases were due to injuries sustained from falling or slipping on the job. It is important to spot unsafe conditions which may lead to slips and falls and prevent them.

There are various ways to suffer slips and falls while working. You can slip and lose your balance, you can trip over objects left improperly in your walkway, or you can simply fall from an elevated position above the ground.

To avoid slips and falls, be on the lookout for foreign substances on the floors. Watch for deposits of water, food, grease, oil, sawdust, soap, or debris. Even small quantities are enough to make you fall.

When entering a building from the outdoors or from debris areas, clean your footwear thoroughly. Snowy and rainy weather requires a door mat at each entrance to allow for complete wiping of shoes. Don't go too fast, walk safely and avoid changing directions too sharply.

Beware of tripping hazards. Any object left in the aisles or other areas designed for pedestrian traffic invites falls. Extension cords, tools carts, and other items should be removed or properly barricaded. If equipment or supplies are left in walkways, report it. Let the proper personnel remove it. Keep passageways clean of debris by using trash barrels. If you project trash into a can but missed. PICK IT UP!

Walk where you're supposed to walk. Short cuts through machine areas invite accidents. Concentrate on where you are going - horseplay and inattention leaves you vulnerable to unsafe conditions.

Hold on to handrails when using stairs or ramps. They are there to protect you should a fall occur. If you're carrying a heavy load which hampers your ability to properly ascend or descend stairs, use the elevator, or find help.

The worst falls are from elevated positions like ladders and scaffolding. They may result in serious injuries and death.

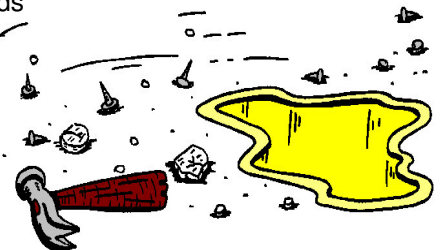
Learn and practice ladder safety and the proper use of scaffolding.

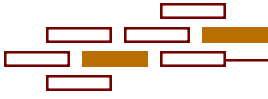
When climbing, use a ladder of proper length that is in good condition. Keep it placed on a firm surface. Do not climb a ladder placed on machinery, crates, stock or boxes. Keep the ladder's base one foot away from the wall for every four feet of height. Don't overreach. Always have control of your balance when working from a ladder. Never climb a ladder with your hands full, and always carry tools in proper carrying devices.

When using a scaffold, be sure it is properly assembled according to the manufacturer's specifications. Check carefully for defects. Standing and working planks should be level and clean. Use toe boards to prevent tools from falling and workers from slipping. Work only with people who practice scaffold safety.

Slips and falls occur every day. The extent of injuries and their recurrence can be minimized through proper safety knowledge and attitudes.

Practice safety Don't learn it through "Accidental Experience."





Tomorrow: Will It Be You

Struck By A Falling Object:

A construction employee was using a four-wheel drive front end loader bucket weighing 2300 lbs. The bucket had been laid in a brush rake mounted on the front end loader and fastened with a chain so it would not roll while being transported. When the end loader arrived at the spot to unload the bucket and lower it to the ground, the victim stepped into the bucket and unhooked the chain. As he stepped back out of the bucket, his weight overbalanced the load causing it to tip over on him.

Struck By I Beam:

A 3 foot wide by 4 foot long I beam was being moved by forklift. The employee apparently decided to jump on the beam and ride, rather than walk. The beam slid off crushing the employee.

Fell 47 feet From the Roof:

A foreman and three ironworkers were installing reinforcing rings around the exterior of a 150 foot high concrete coal silo. The foreman was on the roof of the power house when he fell 47 feet. The cause of the fall could not be determined.

Fell From Scaffold:

Employee and an ironworker apprentice were changing the supporting line on a four-wheel level suspension scaffold, 30 foot high. The bottom was one foot above the ground. The foreman climbed up the scaffold to help. The platform was not secured and there was no separate fall prevention device provided. Safety lines were manila rope and nylon rope, and the employee was not wearing safety belts. The one-inch manila rope supporting the west end of the scaffold broke causing the scaffold to fall causing the fatality.

Struck-By: Falling/Flying Objects

You are at risk from falling objects when you are beneath cranes, scaffolds, etc., or where overhead work is being performed. There is a danger from flying objects when power tools, or activities like pushing, pulling, or prying, may cause objects to become airborne. Injuries can range from minor abrasions to concussions, blindness, or death.

How Do You Avoid Hazards?

Wear hard hats.

Stack materials to prevent sliding, falling, or collapse.

Use protective measures such as toeboards and debris nets.

Use safety glasses, goggles, face shields, etc., where machines or tools may cause flying particles.

Inspect tools, such as saws and lathes, to insure that protective guards are in good condition.

Make sure you are trained in the proper operations of powder actuated tools.

Avoid working underneath loads being moved.

Barricade hazard areas and post warning signs.

PRACTICE WORK ZONE SAFETY

Define your work zone. If you're working in an area, it becomes your work zone.

Anticipate potential hazards. Changes in procedures can mean new hazards.

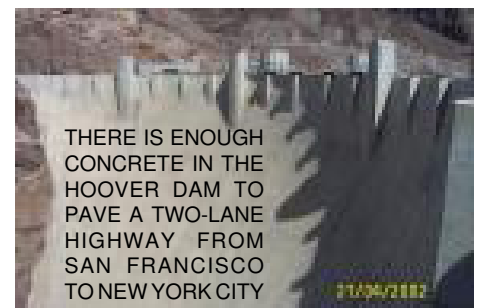
Remove, repair, or report any safety hazards.

Protect your safety within your work zone. Wear appropriate PPE and follow all safety rules.

Make others aware of your work zone. Keep the safety of others in mind. Keep a protective eye on anyone who enters your work zone.

Communicate when you share a work zone. Make sure everyone is aware of hazards and appropriate protective measures.

Secure your work zone before you leave it. Follow all required housekeeping and safety procedures.



We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com

Secure tools and materials to prevent them from falling on people below.