



FOCUS on Falls

Preventing Falls in Industrial Workplaces

A joint prevention
initiative of the



WSIB

ONTARIO

CSPAAT

Workplace Safety
Insurance Board

Commissariat de la Sécurité
du Travail - Ontario
Centre de prévention des chutes



Ontario

Falls cause death and critical injuries!

Since 1996, 24 people have died due to falls in industrial workplaces including:

- a worker who fell 8 feet from a ladder
- a warehouse worker who fell 21 feet when he unhooked a lanyard from his waist, moved from one shelving unit to another and then slipped on a skid
- a worker who fell 40 inches from a loading dock
- a worker who fell from a roof

20 other families lost a spouse, brother, sister, son, daughter, or parent in falls-related incidents.

The 'luckier' workers suffered critical injuries such as broken limbs, cracked ribs and head injuries. Here are some actual examples of how workers fell:

- over a hose on the floor
- from a lift truck
- down stairs
- 3 feet from a vehicle
- off a loading dock
- 2 feet from a stool
- while climbing on a dumpster
- 38 feet off a ladder

... and unfortunately there are many **more falls happening every day.**

Who's falling?

Anyone can **fall at work.**

- 1 in 5 lost time injuries involve falls
- 80 people are injured every day by falling at work — **that's 1 every 20 minutes!**

Did you know that...

- “same level falls” like slips and trips account for 66% of fall injuries
- a simple slip or trip claim costs an average of \$2000 in insurance payouts
- falls from heights of a few inches to 120 stories account for 30% of falls-related injuries - and most of the deaths
- falls onto or against things account for 10% of the injuries

Did you know that...

Over a ten-day period in 1999, 3 workers were critically injured and 1 died due to falls in industrial workplaces.

Why are people still falling?

In spite of prevention efforts people continue to fall because:

- working conditions like poor lighting, slippery walking surfaces, and poor housekeeping exist
- protective devices like guard rails are missing
- equipment like ladders and scaffolds is in poor shape or misused
- personal protective equipment (PPE) is not available, not used or misused
- there are poor work practices like unclear job procedures, lack of training or workers rushing to meet deadlines

Falls cost us all:

- annually, falls cost industrial employers more than \$12 million in direct insurance payments
- each person injured in a fall was away from work for an average of 4 weeks
- when you include all of the other costs like re-training, lost production and equipment damage the costs skyrocket

... and don't forget the **human pain** and **suffering of workers, their co-workers** and their **families.**

How to prevent falls

Implement a falls prevention program and ensure that:

- equipment is in good repair and used properly
- workers are trained
- PPE is in good repair and used properly
- lighting is adequate
- housekeeping rules are established and followed
- snow and ice are cleared and wet floors cleaned promptly
- job procedures are clear
- supervisors understand their role and the hazards
- incidents and injuries are investigated to find and eliminate the root cause

Know and follow the legislation :

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires you to take every reasonable precaution to protect workers, provide information and instruction and to ensure that workers use or wear the required PPE.

Industrial Regulations focus on:

- same level: clear, smooth well lit floor surfaces
- heights: guard rails, ladders, fall protection, PPE if over 10 feet

Who can help?



The Industrial Accident Prevention Association has:

- Fall Prevention programs
- Fall Prevention training
- Information Centre
- Best Practices in Fall Prevention

Phone: 1-800-406-IAPA (4272) - www.iapa.on.ca



The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board can help you analyze your injury record to determine claim costs and develop a prevention strategy based on your past experience.

Phone: 1-800-663-6639 - www.wsib.on.ca



The Ministry of Labour can help you understand the legislation and reinforce the requirements.

Phone: See blue pages of phone book for local MOL office - www.gov.on.ca/lab/main.htm

You may contact any of these organizations and will be linked to the others as needed. We are partnering to co-ordinate and plan programs, activities and services that will meet your injury prevention needs.