

Falling Objects

Week Number 40 (October 1 - 7) 2017 Edition

Falling objects such as materials, tools, debris or equipment can cause serious injuries or even death.

Let's look first at the problem of materials. Materials are piled in the yard, in the truck, or at various places on the jobsite. All materials should be piled on a sound base, straight and steady, and at a reasonable height. It may be well to cross-tie and cover materials for protection and safety. Materials on a roof or elevation should be secured so the wind can't blow it off and strike someone below.

Piling materials on scaffolds requires special care. You have to be sure not to overload, to allow ample space for work operations, and to make the piles stable. Be sure toe boards are placed on all scaffolding and open elevations to safeguard workers below from falling materials such as loose brick, tools, and equipment.

When you want to send material, tools, or equipment to higher elevations, use containers or buckets and hand lines. Never throw materials or tools. When you pull on a hand line, be sure to stand clear of the loaded materials and tools. Keep an eye on the load as it goes up. When you have to pull up materials that can't be placed in a container, fasten the load securely to the hand line. If material like pipe, conduit, and rods aren't properly fastened in bundles, a piece can be jarred loose and hit the worker pulling the hand tie.

Tools, equipment and materials often fall when workers attempt to carry them up ladders. Use hand lines so your hands will be free to hold onto the ladder when you go up. When you load hoists and platform skimps, be sure the materials and packages are stacked safely. A sloppy load is a load of trouble. Never leave a load suspended.

When you work beneath other operations, like riveting crews, wear your hard hat. It can be a lifesaver. When you strip forms, it's important to use the necessary guards. Often, you'll find workers working on makeshift scaffolds, attempting to strip panels on the floor slab. They don't seem to know that the entire section might come loose and fall on them.

Coordinate with other trades to avoid or minimize working below each other. Never work underneath suspended loads.