



“Fall Causes”

Injury due to falls is a major problem in construction today. Injury and death from falls is second only to traffic accidents taking some 21,000 lives each year.

Falls are placed in two categories:

1. Falls on the same level.
2. Falls from different elevation.

First, let's look at some of the causes of falls on the same level such as slipping, tripping, and bumping into.

- Slipping could be due to ice on the walk, oil or grease on the floor, a banana peel left over from lunch, a small piece of pipe, a soft drink bottle, or a welding rod stub, just to name a few. We can avoid these hazards in two ways; first, we must practice good housekeeping by keeping our work areas clean and orderly; second, we must be alert and watch our step.
- Tripping can be caused by an irregular surface, lines or hoses across walkways, tools not in their proper place, poor lighting, and many others. The rules for avoiding tripping hazards are much the same as for slipping hazards; that is, practicing good housekeeping, watching your step, and in addition, keep your shoes (safety shoes) in good condition. Bad soles and heels have caused many falls.
- Falls caused by bumping into also result in serious injuries. We should be especially careful in hallways, warehouses, and places where blind corners exist. We sometimes get in too much of a hurry; maybe we are late in the morning or in a hurry to get home in the evening. In this rush we go around a corner too fast and collide with another person and we go spinning.

Falls from different elevation are usually more serious than falls on the same level. These too, can be caused by slipping and tripping but are also caused by many other factors such as misjudging a step or a grab bar on a piece of heavy equipment, over-reaching a ladder or scaffold, not tying a ladder off properly, faulty handrails on scaffolds, not using safety belts when we should; you can name many more.