



## TOOLBOX TALK #28

### FALLING DOWN ON THE JOB IS NO LAUGHING MATTER

For reasons unclear, the cartoon sight of a person slipping on a banana peel is supposed to invoke laughter. There is nothing – absolutely nothing – amusing about falling on a construction site.

There are several types of falls that we must take precautions to avoid:

- Slip and fall on a single level – can result in a variety of injuries, including twisted ankle, broken limbs, sprains and cuts
- Slip and fall from one level to another level – can result in all of the above type injuries and more severe injuries including paralysis and death
- Fall from ladder, scaffolding, platform or other object – is the single leading cause of fatality on construction sites

Avoiding this hazard requires good housekeeping, regular inspections of equipment, use of fall protection gear and restraints, and professional work habits. Since 1980, more than 4,000 construction workers have been killed in job related falls. Construction accounts for more fall-related deaths than any other industry in America. All are preventable.

Whether on the ground, or working from heights, this is an important area for all of us to be aware at all times. Check your equipment every time you use it. Your fall protection equipment, ladders, scaffolding and constraints must work properly 100% of the time. You should clean spills immediately. Be aware of your surroundings, particularly after recent rainfall. Do not work in areas that are not safe, until they are made safe.

Nothing good can come of a fall. In our profession, it's a risk exposure we must actively seek to eliminate.

Facilitator Notes: Survey the current job site. Do a physical inspection with your crew of areas that must be kept clear of spills and debris. Review safety policies and visual inspections of ladders, platforms and scaffolding as an example, and remind your crew to do so routinely, throughout the day, not just in the morning. Ask for questions and solicit input from your team members.

**Additional Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Crew Member Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Presented By:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date/Time** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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List additional attendees on back of sheet