



Fall Protection

eSafetyLine

Guardrails

Falls on a jobsite result in far too many injuries every year. According to the Department of Labor on any typical work day 3 workers won't be at work because they're dead and another 16,000 won't show up because they have injuries from an on-site fall.

Guardrails, when installed and used correctly, can greatly reduce your risk of falls. They must be installed in the following situations:

- Along open edges of roofs and floors
- On form work, scaffolds and other work surfaces
- Openings in floors and roofs
- Any where else that poses a fall risk to workers

When installing guardrails, it's important to remember that how they're constructed will determine how effective they'll be. This is why well-anchored posts are essential. They are the foundation for the guardrails. In addition to the posts, guardrails should consist of a top and mid rail as well as a toe board. These are the cross pieces that help to keep workers as well as materials and equipment from falling.

If there are guardrails on your worksite you can help keep yourself and coworkers safe by following these simple rules:

1. Get in the habit of checking the integrity of the guardrails in your work area. If you find a weak or missing rail or section either correct the situation if you can or report it to the supervisor so it can be repaired.

2. If you bump a rail with material or equipment, always check it before you move on to see if you've weakened or damaged it. If you find you have damaged some part of the guardrails system, fix it if you can. If you can't repair it, report it so it can be fixed.

3. When you do repair or replace any part of the guardrail system, remember that you are at a greater fall risk. It may be a good idea to use a different means of fall protection during the repair.

During the course of the work day, it may be necessary to remove parts of the guardrail system so materials or equipment can be brought in. Until the guardrails are replaced the open edge should be roped off and marked with warning signs. The removed sections are often not replaced or if they are, they are just hastily thrown back up. This weakens the guardrail system and can be even more dangerous than no guardrails at all. Weakened guardrails give workers a false sense of safety that doesn't exist.

If everyone on the site follows these rules to check and maintain the guardrails during the work day, every worker will have a safer day.

Discussion Questions

Why would a weakened guardrail system be more dangerous to workers than no guardrails at all?

What should you do if you bump into the guardrails system with a piece of equipment?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date