



## Falling Objects

Falling objects can be materials, tools, debris or equipment, and if they land on you, you can be seriously injured or even killed.

Let's look at the problem of how to prevent falling objects. First, is the work being done overhead? How can accidents be prevented? Here are some basic precautions to be followed:

- . Warn those below that you're about to begin an overhead job by signs, barricades, and good communications.
- . Don't carry tools or materials up a ladder. Use a hand winch line, containers, or buckets lifted by a line.
- . Before raising tools or materials with a hand line or a winch line, make absolutely sure they are securely fastened so they won't slip out.

NOTE: There are many styles of commercially available lanyards for tying off almost every tool imaginable and although OSSA does not recommend suppliers this is an area we encourage you research, or discuss with your Supervisor.

- . When you pile materials on scaffolds, make sure scaffolding and platforms are provided with toe boards so objects don't fall off.
- . Never throw materials or tools.
- . Make sure the load being lifted by hand line or scaffold is balanced and that no one is under the load being lifted.
- . Keep tools and materials away from the edges of platforms and ladders and off railings or window sills.
- . Don't stick tools in your pockets because, when you bend over or reach, they may fall out.
- . Practice good housekeeping on the overhead job and keep tools and materials that are not in use picked up and stored properly.
- . If the nature of the overhead job involves the danger of falling objects, have the area below cleared, and post the necessary warning signs. Rope off the area.

It is equally important that personnel on the ground be aware of overhead work and obey the signs and barricades.



Not all falling objects come from great heights. Probably the most common falling object from a small height is one that a worker is just picking up. The worker doesn't anticipate the heaviness of the object; the object slips and strikes the worker's legs or feet.

Another common instance of an object's falling and causing injury is when two workers are carrying a piece of pipe or some other long, heavy object. Signals are poor, and one worker drops his end of the load. You guessed it; the feet come in for punishment!

Another example: Someone stands a piece of steel or pipe against a wall and walks away. When you approach, the object slips and falls. This can strike any part of the body.

Such injuries are preventable if we wear our hard hats and safety shoes, if we use proper lifting and handling procedures, if proper signals and teamwork are used on a two-man job, and if tools and materials that are not in use are stored in the proper place.

Whether your work takes you overhead or keeps you below, you can eliminate falling objects as a source of danger by following these rules at all times.

Whatever goes up, sooner or later, must come down. Let's make sure it comes down safely.