TOOLBOX TALK

Working at Heights

Topic	Working at Heights	Attendees	0

WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT

Falls from height are still the biggest killer in construction. It does not take a big drop: people die falling off roofs, slabs, trucks and ladders every year. Today we talk about how we stop anyone getting near an open edge in the first place.

1. Any fall that could injure someone needs controls. A risk of falling more than 2 m is high risk construction work and needs a SWMS.
2. Follow the order: avoid working at height if you can, then stop falls with guardrails or platforms, and only then use harnesses to arrest a fall.
3. Do as much as possible on the ground: prefabricate, use long handled tools, lift finished sections into place.
4. Edge protection must be complete: top rail, mid rail and toe board. Report any gap straight away and do not work near it.
5. Never take down a guardrail to get materials in. If a rail has to come off, the area is closed until it goes back up or another control is in place.
6. Cover every hole and penetration with a secured, load rated cover marked HOLE or DANGER. Never lift a cover without a plan.
7. Fragile surfaces such as skylights, old roof sheets and ceiling boards will not hold you. Treat them as an open edge.
8. When roof sheets or floor panels come off, the gap they leave is an open edge. Cover it or net it before you move on to the next one.
9. Check platforms, EWPs and scaffolds are tagged and inspected before you get on.
10. Use the right access to get up and down: stairs, a stair tower or a secured ladder. Never climb scaffold frames, racking or formwork.
11. Stop work if wind, rain or ice makes the surface or edge unsafe.
12. Tools and materials at height need to be tethered or kept back from the edge, with an exclusion zone set up below.
13. Only trained workers use harness systems, and there must be a rescue plan before anyone clips on.
14. If you see an unprotected edge or a missing cover, stop, keep people back and report it. Nobody gets in trouble for stopping a fall.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CREW

1. Where on this site could someone fall right now?
2. Which of those edges could we fix with guardrails instead of harnesses?
3. What do you do if you find a hole cover moved or missing?
4. Who here is trained to rescue someone hanging in a harness?
5. Which jobs on today's list could be done from the ground instead?

Reference: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 (Falls)

RUN BY

	Name	Signature	Date	
Presenter				

ATTENDANCE

Name	Role / company	Signature	Date

Name	Role / company	Signature	Date

Keep this record with your site safety file.