



H S E

HEALTH SAFETY ENVIRONMENTAL



Alert #: SA 22-22

Date: August 3rd, 2022

Dropped Objects

Dropped objects are a serious hazard at many worksites. OSHA estimates that over 50,000 “struck-by a falling object” incidents occur each year on construction sites alone. Objects as small as a bolt can cause serious injury or even death when dropped from a higher level and striking an employee working on the ground. Outside of injuries and deaths, dropped objects are responsible for a large cost to employers due to property damage incidents as well.

Safe Work Practices to Prevent Dropped Object Incidents

Eliminate the hazard: Remove objects and tools from higher levels, scaffolding, or aerial lifts that do not need to be there. Removing objects that can pose a hazard to people working below is the best option to prevent a dropped object incident.

Engineering controls: Barricade zones below higher work levels to prevent personnel from walking into the line of fire of a dropped object. Install toe boards on higher work levels to make sure objects and tools cannot easily slide off an edge to a lower level. Place nets or some type of protective barrier above ground level workers if there is continuous work being performed above a work area. Another engineering control is the use of tool lanyards and bags which limits the object from falling.

PPE: Anytime there are overhead hazards present on a job site, hardhats need to be worn. PPE is always a last line of defense. Wearing a hardhat will only limit the damage a dropped object does, not prevent it from happening. **Rely on eliminating the hazard or installing engineering controls to reduce the chance of objects striking ground personnel instead of PPE to lessen the blow.**

Some key points to remember:

- Identify potential hazards of dropped objects of working at heights on the JSEA.
- Always utilize and fill out the “Dropped Objects Checklist” to assist with identifying potential hazards when working at heights.
- Always use the proper procedure to barricade and label areas for all drop zones to prevent unaware employees from entering the area below operations on the upper level.
- Workers should maintain proper housekeeping of materials and tools before, during and after tasks has been completed.
- It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure that proper communication has been established between all of the different work groups that are performing (SIMOPS) Simultaneous Operations.
- All pre-job planning and procedural control of tasks should address the position of personnel and the potential dangers.

Report all incidents immediately to the GIS Hotline 1-855-543-5163.

SAFETY ALERT