

Guidance

Tool Safety Guidance

Guidance Objectives

The objectives of this guidance are to raise awareness and improve people's understanding of dropped tools, objects and their consequences, including:

Be aware of the possible consequences of dropped tools and objects

Have an understanding of the difference between a Static and Dynamic Dropped Objects and tools

Have an understanding of difference between Preventive and Mitigating Controls

Identifying controls for prevention and mitigation of potential dropped tools and objects

Have an understanding of the importance of the effective use of the tool safety systems

Consider what the potential and actual consequences are from not identifying the hazards

Observations and considerations when carrying out Risk Assessments and writing Method Statements

Identifying and assessing potential dropped tools or objects while planning and monitoring tasks

Consider strategies and systems which can be implemented to prevent dropped tools and objects

The Need For Tool Safety At Height

Working at height in itself is dangerous. Aside from the possibility of falling from height, the actual chance of being struck by dropped tools is also a considerable risk.

Statistically, falling objects are some of the primary causes of deaths as well as injuries in the UK work place. It has recently been verified in the latest published reports*, that in the course of the 12 month period April 2008 to April 2009, the following fatalities and accidental injuries have been brought about by falling physical objects.

- 15 x Deaths
- 3223 x Non fatal major accidents
- 11981 x Over 3 days time lost accidents

Most of these accidents could have been prevented if suitable provision had been made for using tool safety tethering systems. Unfortunately today there is still a lack of awareness. People have not recognised the severity of the problem and are not aware of the simple solutions available. Often those responsible for people working at height are unaware of their legal duties and the implications of their neglect in this area.

(*RIDDOR / Health and Safety Executive 2008/2009 report) "It's now a legal requirement to make provision for tools falling when working at height"

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Examples Of Industries Requiring Dropped Tool Prevention

Even when you're current task isn't at height, consider the environment where you will carry out the activity as well as any other activities which may be happening around you.

Low-level applications include stopping tools from falling into engines and gearboxes, food and pharmaceutical production lines.

High-level applications include construction sites, wind turbines, cranes, buildings, bridges, telecom masts, power lines, railway gantries, aircraft hangers, steel structures, buildings, Scaffolding, towers etc.

Media Reports

Brain Injury from Being Struck By Flying or Falling Objects An impactful blow to the head by a falling or moving object can easily cause brain damage and permanent disability. While the majority of brain injuries are caused by the head striking an object, moving and falling objects still contribute to thousands of brain injuries each year. The most common types of falling objects that cause serious injury are equipment, tools and merchandise. The severity of an injury is always related to the laws of physics: the weight of an object, the speed or velocity it travelled, and the height from which it fell. An object as small as a bolt or a small pebble can cause a severe brain injury if it falls from a high enough distance or with enough force.

Dropped Object Injuries

Dropped object injuries form the biggest of all injuries in the construction sites and industrial production sites. Workers are mainly the people affected in these injuries. The major causes of injuries are objects falling from construction scaffoldings and platforms....

The fatal injuries traumatize the fellow workers who lose their confidence to work in such sites.

LEADING EDGE

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