

Working at Height: Employee Factsheet

What is 'Working at height'?

A place is 'at height' if a person could be injured falling from it. It does not necessarily mean working above ground level, but is applicable when work activities could lead to a fall causing injury including, for example, into a hole. It excludes slips, trips and falls on the level, or permanent workplace stairs.

REMEMBER: Observe the rules and prevent a fall.

REMEMBER: There is NO safe height to fall from.

Hazards of working at height:

- Operatives falling from height due to unsafe work practices
- Overturning of machines due to poor operating technique or unsatisfactory ground conditions
- Collision with vehicles
- Tools and materials, etc., falling from heights
- Contact with high-level live electrical cables and other obstructions
- Exhaust fumes, if internal combustion engines are used in confined
- Spaces, or in areas such as excavations or drains
- High wind speeds and other adverse weather conditions.

When working at height:

- Only use ladders for short duration, low risk work when you can maintain a secure handhold on the ladder at all times •
- Ensure that any working platform is safe and secure whether static or mobile. Mobile platforms must have out-riggers to improve their stability
- Fit handrails, toe boards, etc., sufficiently wide to walk on without the risk of tumbling or losing balance
- Use safety harnesses, fall-arrest devices or safety nets to prevent falls
- Supply and use anchorage points for safety harnesses and ladders
- Anticipate adverse weather conditions
- Scrape mud off boots before climbing ladders
- Do not over-reach on ladders and platforms
- Do not allow rubbish to accumulate. Use a chute or lower materials safely.

Do you know?

- Where to obtain information and guidance?
- How to seek help and support?

If you have any concerns, speak to your health and safety representative or manager.

Did you know?

- Half the number of people who fall from a height over 2 metres die. Don't become a fatality.
- Ladders are probably the most used and misused pieces of access equipment. The vast majority of ladder accidents occur because the ladder is not secured at the top.
- Last year 25 fatalities were attributed to falls from height, with over half occurring in the construction industry. Thousands of others suffer serious injury.

Your responsibilities:

All persons working at height under the control of another person are required to follow the instruction and training with which they have been provided and to report any defects or activities which endanger their own or other persons safety.

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