



Slips and Falls

**Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission/
Health & Safety Division**

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You might begin this safety talk by asking your workers if they know what single thing causes more injuries than anything else. The answer is "falls." It is only right that we spend a little more time working to eliminate falls since that they are one of our biggest problem. Let's look first at the causes of falls and then at ways to prevent them.

Question: What are some of the more common causes of falls?

1. Climbing around on stacked material. Such stacks are not meant to be climbed on.
2. Carrying a load you can't see over. You and anyone you bump into could easily fall down.
3. Scrap materials and tools left lying around become tripping hazards.
4. Using a defective ladder or using a good ladder the wrong way. (Hold the ladder with both hands going up or down.)
5. Using boxes, blocks or other substitutes for ladders.
6. Using scaffolds which are not firmly based, nor have proper guardrails, work surface, etc.
7. Slick places caused by spilled oil, mud, gravel, ice, water, etc.
8. Cluttered stairways and other areas that are not generally well lighted.
9. Open elevator shafts. Nobody ever knows who took the guardrail down and forgot to put it back.
10. Running, jumping or horseplay on the job. This is always dangerous.
11. Lifting while standing on an unsecure surface. Feet must be firmly planted and not in danger of slipping before attempting the lift.
12. Floor opening, holes, perimeter edges.
13. Pant cuffs that are too long.
14. Defective shoes that can catch on things and cause you to trip.

Question: What are the main things that we need to do to avoid falls?

1. Have adequate lighting.
2. Eliminate slippery places.
3. Guard floor openings and holes.
4. Keep scrap material cleaned up
5. Use only safe ladders and scaffolds.
6. Wear good, serviceable work shoes.