

Construction Safety - OSHA's Focus Four Hazards Cont.

OSHA Rules and Regulations for Focus Four Hazards

With the increased emphasis on focus four hazards, it should come as no surprise that OSHA has also developed various rules, regulations, and best practices that companies can implement to help keep their workers safe on the job site. There are a variety of measures that construction professionals should adhere to in order to minimize their risk of a recordable on the job site. Here's a closer look at some of them:

Falls

Proper PPE, such as personal fall arrest equipment, should always be worn. This is in addition to hard hats, safety glasses, gloves, and more.

Workers should always maintain three points of contact when working at elevated heights, especially when mounting and dismounting equipment.

Shoes or boots with adequate traction should always be worn on site.

Professionals should be properly trained on using ladders and mobile elevated lift units prior to working with them.

Scaffolding should be installed correctly and inspected each day to ensure it is safe.

In addition to fall arrest equipment, guardrails, nets, and other components should be installed when appropriate.

The job site should also remain neat and tidy to prevent tripping over equipment, debris, building materials, or any other objects.

Struck By

Ensure materials are stacked and stored properly.

Set up barriers around any heavy or suspended loads to ensure workers are a safe distance away.

Secure tools and equipment properly when not in use, especially if they're at elevated heights.

Ensure reverse signal alarms are always working properly on equipment to help alert any workers in the vicinity of potential threats.

Ensure workers are wearing high-visibility safety vests so they can be seen by those operating equipment or vehicles.

Electrocution

Ensure that PPE is worn properly by all workers. This includes gloves, boots, long sleeves, safety glasses, and may also include face shields.

Enforce a lockout and tag-out procedure on the job site so that equipment can be properly used, stored, and secured when not in use.

Ensure equipment is de-energized properly.

Set up mobile barriers and ensure that workers stay safely away from any parts or equipment that is energized and could pose a safety threat.

Maintain a safe working distance from power lines, especially those that are overhead.

Caught-In/Between

Workers should be trained on the basics, such as ensuring that they never put themselves between any piece of heavy equipment and an immovable object.

Workers should refrain from wearing baggy clothes, jewelry or other items that may get caught in vehicles or equipment.

Stay away from the swing radius of any moving or rotating objects.

How to Mitigate Risk

In addition to following the aforementioned best practices, there are also a number of other things that you can implement on the job site to mitigate risk or minimize the severity of injuries should they occur. Here's a look:

PPE

No one should be allowed on site without the proper PPE. Proper shoes and boots should be worn with adequate traction to prevent slips and falls. High-visibility safety vests, shirts or jackets should be worn by all workers to ensure that any equipment or vehicle operators can see them. And hard hats, safety glasses, and, in some cases, face shields and gloves, should also be worn on site.

Even in the event of a focus four incident, this PPE can help prevent serious injuries or even any injury at all.

Safety Training

Safety best practices should be regularly reinforced on every project. Best practices should also be regularly enforced during morning huddles and Toolbox Talks. Safety walks should be regularly performed to monitor activity and corrective action should be implemented if workers are not adhering to protocol.

Learn from Mistakes

Every company - regardless of the industry or market they work in - should always be striving for continuous improvement. That said, site managers should be helping the field personnel/subs they oversee learn from any mistakes on site so that they can be corrected in similar, future scenarios. This applies with any potential safety incident, but especially with any of the focus four hazards. Even if workers wear the appropriate PPE, and adhere to safety guidelines and best practices, incidents can still happen. There's a lesson from every one of them - and implementing this lesson and relaying it as a teaching tool to other workers should not be something that goes to waste.

Any industry that involves as many tools, equipment and other miscellaneous threats as construction does is going to have its fair share of dangers. And while it's the goal of the industry to build every project without any recordables, there's bound to be issues. By following these guidelines, you can help your jobsite become safer.

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