



## TOOL BOX TALKS



### FLOOR AND WALL OPENINGS

Unprotected holes or openings in the floors or walls at construction sites are extremely dangerous. They need to be securely covered or guarded in order to protect against injuries resulting from falls through these openings. Serious injuries and even deaths have occurred when workers have fallen through holes, shafts or other openings which were unguarded, covered by materials that were not strong enough to support the workers or protected by improperly secured barricades or covers.

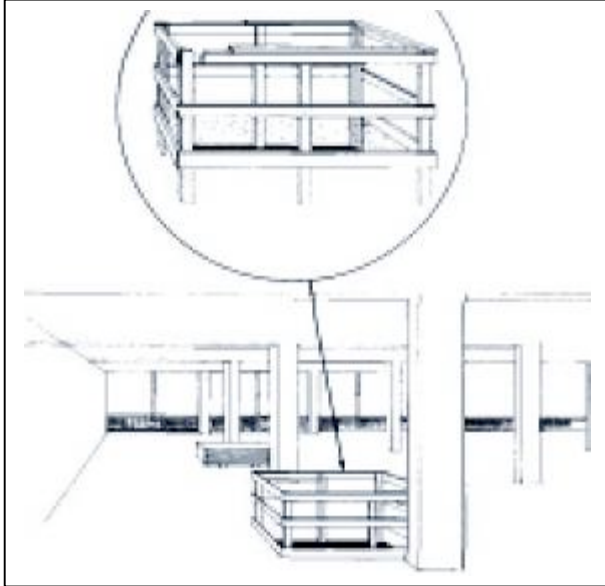
Work safety requires that we eliminate job hazards and take every reasonable effort to protect workers from disabling falls through unprotected floor or wall openings.

Be aware of the following requirements with regard to floor and wall openings on a construction site:

- a) Floor holes into which persons can accidentally walk are to be guarded by either a standard railing with standard toe boards on all exposed sides, or be securely covered and marked. Safety nets, Personal Fall Arrest Systems, or personal restraint systems may also be used as appropriate.
- b) Wall openings, from which there is a drop of more than 6 feet and where the bottom of the opening is less than 39 inches above the working surface, are to be guarded with guardrails. Safety nets, Personal Fall Arrest Systems, or personal restraint systems may also be used as appropriate.
- c) A floor hole cover shall be of sufficient strength and construction so that it can withstand at least twice the load anticipated to be placed on it and secured so that it can't be accidentally displaced.
- d) Where there is a danger of materials falling through a floor or wall opening, the opening is to be protected by a standard toe board or a solid enclosing screen.
- e) The bottom of a wall opening, which is less than 4 inches above the working surface, is to be protected by a standard toe board or an enclosing screen.
- f) Whenever work is being performed on a floor or wall opening, the area below these holes should be properly roped off or barricaded.

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Always notify your supervisor of any unprotected floor and wall openings and ensure they are protected before working in the area.

In addition to the above requirements, every employee on the job is to be warned about the danger of leaving floor and wall openings unguarded.

Unguarded openings should be reported and guarded as soon as possible to avoid a fall injury or fatality.