

The *BSO Plus Safety Topic* is a review designed from the BSO Plus agenda. This safety topic is your way to stay current on the safety information over the 3 years, so please ensure you submit the completed test to your employer for record retention.

## WORKING AT HEIGHTS



Falls are one of the leading causes of critical injuries and deaths of workers at construction sites in Ontario.

In September and October 2013, Ministry of Labour inspectors conducted a blitz at construction sites. The top 3 most commonly issued orders were:

1. Improper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) [Reg 213 s. 22 & 23]
2. Installation or composition of guardrails [Reg 213 s. 26.1-26.3, 135 (1)(c)]
3. The construction and design of scaffolding and other work platforms [Reg 213, s. 127-135]

### Working at Heights Training



As of April 1, 2015, certain workers will need to complete a working at heights training program that has been approved by the Chief Prevention Officer before they can work at heights.

The new training requirement is for workers on construction projects who use any of the following methods of fall protection:

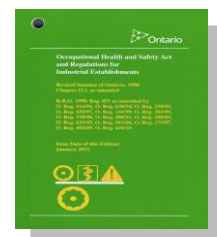
- travel restraint systems
- fall restricting systems
- fall arrest systems
- safety nets
- work belts or safety belts

There is a two year transition period for workers who already meet the existing fall protection training requirements set out in section 26.2 of the Construction Regulation. These workers will have until April 1, 2017 to complete an approved working at heights training program.

The new training requirements in the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training Regulation will be in addition to the current training requirements under the Construction Regulation.

### Regulations

Ontario Regulation 213/91 s.26. – 26.9 for Construction Projects, regulates the requirements for working at heights. If you will be working at heights, you must take appropriate training in fall protection; the proper equipment; and rescue planning.



The use of fall protection devices are required when a worker is exposed to any of the following hazards:

- Falling more than 3 metres (10 feet)
- Falling more than 1.2 metres, where the work area is used as a path for a wheel barrow or similar equipment
- Falling into operating machinery
- Falling into water or another liquid
- Falling into or onto a hazardous substance or object
- Falling through an opening on a work surface



The local Safety Partnership Standard supersedes Regulation 213/91 and requires the use of fall protection for working at heights greater than 6 feet. Before you perform any work at height, it is important that you confirm with your supervisor about the specific fall protection equipment and procedures used at your workplace.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FALL PREVENTION & FALL PROTECTION?

**FALL PREVENTION** methods are the best choice for keeping you safe. These methods, such as guardrails, put a physical barrier between you and the fall. Fall Prevention stops you from reaching the hazard in the first place.

**FALL PROTECTION** requires you to use personal protective equipment (PPE). For PPE to work, it means you have already fallen.

## Maintain 100% Tie-off



You must always be tied off to a secure anchor point when moving from one point to another while working at heights.

This can be achieved by using a double or Y-style lanyard attached to your harness D-ring.

When moving locations, always attach your second lanyard to the new location before unhooking the first.



## Worker Fined \$1,500 for Not Using Fall Protection

TORONTO, ON - Christopher Schwaemmie, a Toronto hoist worker, was fined \$1,500 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

On October 12, 2011, Christopher Schwaemmie was on a hoist tower at a construction project located at 717 Sheppard Avenue West in Toronto. He jumped from the tower to a nearby roof. The jump was seen by a Ministry of Labour inspector. The inspector saw that Mr. Schwaemmie was wearing a fall protection harness and lanyard, but the lanyard was not tied off to anything. The hoist tower he jumped from was approximately 15.24 metres (50 feet) above the ground.

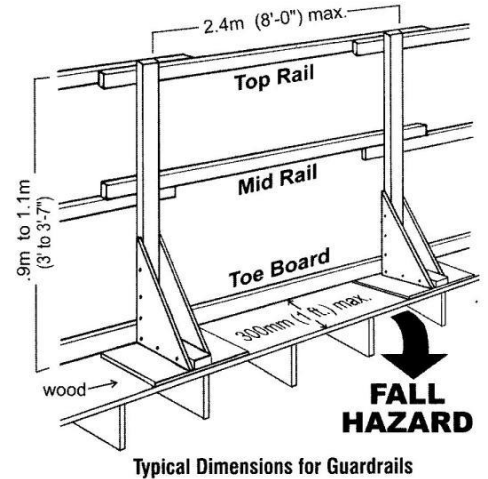
**Conviction:** OHSA, Section 28(1)(a); Ontario Regulation 213/91, Section 26.1 (2)

## Guardrails

Guardrails are the best and most convenient type of fall protection because they prevent the fall from occurring. They protect workers from open edges or holes in work surfaces.

**Proper Installation:** A guardrail must be properly installed no farther than 300 mm or one foot from an edge, and must be capable of resisting defined loads anywhere along its length. A temporary removal of a section of the guardrail will require the worker to wear fall protection and be tied off.

Seen here is an image of a properly constructed guardrail. A guardrail must consist of a top rail, which is not lower than .90 meters, a mid rail, and a toe board [Reg 213 s. 26.3 (4)].



## Scaffolds

Scaffolds are a better alternative to working off a ladder. They provide a stable work platform with guardrails on all working levels.

Locally, a 3-tag system is used for scaffolding: red, yellow, and green tags.

- **Red** tags indicate a scaffold is unsafe to use. Only the people qualified to erect or dismantle scaffolds can use a red-tagged scaffold.
- **Yellow** tags list any conditions or precautions that must be exercised when using the scaffold. Read the scaffold tag carefully.
- **Green** tags mean the scaffold is safe for use.
- If there is no tag on a scaffold, it should be treated the same as a red tag.



Most plant sites perform monthly inspections of the scaffolds to ensure that the tags are correct and that the scaffold has not been altered and is safe to use. During your inspection of the scaffold, make sure that you look for both the colour tag and the inspection tag prior to using it.



### Contractors and Supervisors Fined \$126,000 After Worker Falls

London, Ont. - Rosati Construction Inc. of Windsor and supervisor Matteo Romano were fined \$60,000 and \$3,000 respectively on May 20 for violations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) after a worker was injured.

Keller Roofing & Sheet Metal Inc. of Exeter and supervisor Joseph Gower were also fined \$60,000 and \$3,000 respectively on March 25 in the same matter.

On July 29, 2008, a Keller worker was injured after falling through an opening in a roof at a construction project at 4025 White Oak Rd., London. The worker fell about six metres onto a gravel pile. A Ministry of Labour investigation found that the worker had no fall protection after plywood used to cover the opening had been removed.

**Conviction:** Ontario Regulation 213/91, Section 26.3(3)