Falls in the Construction Industry Stats & Facts



FACTS

1. Fall protection is a broad concept that includes training, procedures, rules, systems, and methods intended to protect workers from fall hazards.
2. Fall protection doesn’t mean bulky or cumbersome equipment, it doesn’t interfere with work tasks, and it doesn’t get in the way of co-workers.
3. Fall protection implies shared responsibilities.

- If you are an employer, you must be aware of fall hazards and you must eliminate them or control your employees’ exposure to them.
- If you are an employee, you are responsible for following the policies, procedures, and training requirements established by your employer.
- Building owners and managers, architects, engineers, and equipment manufacturers have responsible roles to play during a typical construction project.

STATS

- Falls to a lower level have remained the leading cause of construction fatalities over time. Of 389 fatal falls in 2017, 367 (94%) were to a lower level. While making up only a small percentage of total fatalities, slips, trips, and falls on the same level were responsible for an increased percentage of fatalities in 2017 compared to 2011.
- The construction industry experienced more fatal falls to a lower level than any other major industry. In 2017, more than half (51%, 367 of the total 713) of fall fatalities to a lower level in all industries occurred in construction.
- While the number of fatal falls to a lower level increased after the Recession, the rate was relatively stable. The rate rose slightly after 2011 (3 deaths per 100,000 full-time equivalents (FTEs)), and remained at 3.6 per 100,000 FTEs from 2014 to 2016 before decreasing to 3.4 per 100,000 FTEs in 2017.
- The risk of fatal falls varied among construction subgroups. From 2011 to 2017, the construction industry subsector with the most fatal falls to a lower level was Roofing Contractors with 512 fatal fall events, followed by Residential Building Construction (365 deaths) and Painting and Wall Covering (182 deaths).