Three-point Climbing – Beats One-point Landings Every Time



Drivers and equipment operators who think their jobs will keep them injury free should think again. The reality is that construction workers who drive or use machinery are seriously injured each day as they climb carelessly onto their trailers, trucks and other heavy equipment.

The key to preventing accidents of this kind is to follow the three-point rule—a handy stabilizing technique workers can use to enter and exit vehicles, machines and equipment safely.

It's simple really—just remember to keep three of your four limbs in contact with the vehicle or piece of equipment when entering or exiting. It can be any three limbs—two hands and one foot or one hand and two feet—as long as all three limbs make firm contact.

Here are some other suggestions for avoiding falls:

- Face the cab or ladder when entering and exiting. Be sure to get down slowly if you are tired or have worked a long shift.
- Don't jump from any vehicle or piece of equipment, regardless of how short the distance seems. That's how sprains and breaks occur.
- Never hang from a vehicle door or its frame.
- Stabilize yourself for the climb by grabbing the handles or rails firmly when entering or exiting.
- Don't improvise and use the wheel hubs or tires as steps. Many slips occur this way.
- Never walk backwards near the rear or side edges of the truck bed. The ground is closer than you might think.
- Avoid climbing on top of a load.
- Examine fixed ladders to ensure they are attached firmly and are completely vertical. Ladders should not be sloped near the top.
- Look for, and report, slippery surfaces, damaged steps and loose handholds. Steps and other work areas should be well lighted.
- Wear appropriate boots or shoes with good support. This will provide good traction.
- Use a loading station with a fixed platform for loading and unloading.
- Be careful not to fall in the gap between the loading dock and the vehicle

if no bridging device is in place.
- Use safety equipment (including nets, ropes, straps and fall arrest equipment) to prevent falls while covering or securing a load.

Don’t allow yourself to become complacent about safety. Protect yourself by taking responsibility for your health, the equipment you operate and the environment you work in.