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Dropped Objects

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Comments:

Dropped objects have been a hazard ever since gravity became a force to reckon with:and in construction, it's no joke. In 2023 alone, **312 workers lost their lives after being struck by falling objects**. These incidents are entirely preventable, yet they continue to happen across jobsite's every day.

It's Not Just the Big Stuff

When we think about falling objects, we often picture large tools or materials. But in reality, even the smallest item can cause serious harm. The damage depends on where it lands, how fast it's falling, and who's below.

Here are some common culprits of dropped object injuries.

Drills, hammers, pliers.

Tape measures, flashlights, knives.

Bolts, screws and nails.

Spray cans and rolls of tape.

Water bottles and cell phones.

These might seem harmless, but each one has sent someone to the hospital:or worse.

Potential Injuries Include.

Cuts and lacerations.

Bruises and broken bones.

Neck and back injuries.

Concussions or traumatic brain injuries.

Permanent paralysis.

Death.

How Do We Prevent Dropped Objects:

The best way to prevent dropped objects is by using a hierarchy of controls:

Eliminate the Hazard - Remove unnecessary tools, equipment, and materials from elevated surfaces like ladders, scaffolds, and MEWP's.

Engineering Controls - Use tool lanyards, tethers, and securing mechanisms for anything at height and set up barricades or controlled access zones (CAZ) beneath elevated work areas to keep others out of the drop zone.

Administrative Controls - Communicate clearly with your team when overhead work is happening and conduct regular inspections of work platforms and storage areas.

PPE (Last Line of Defense) - Safety helmets and hard hats are crucial but don't stop the object from falling - they only reduce the severity of the injury. Don't rely on PPE alone.

Stay Sharp, Stay Safe.

Always know what's around and below you.

If you see a tool lying unsecured, don't ignore it - secure it or remove it.

Be accountable: every person on site plays a role in preventing dropped object incidents.

Remember This!

Gravity never takes a break:and neither should our vigilance. One careless moment could change someone's life forever. The most important tip is to stay observant of what and who is around you. The tools that are out and not being used, the people who are beside and beneath you. A lot of injuries can be avoided when responsibility and caution are put first. If you see a tool or piece of equipment laying out that could possibly fall or be tripped over, pick it up and move it to a safe location.