



Construction Training Centers of New York State

Accredited by the National Center for Construction Education & Research
6369 Collamer Drive, East Syracuse, New York 13057
Phone 315-463-7539 or 888-NY-NCCER (888-696-2237)

Tool Box Safety Talks #37 Weekending 9-14-07 Guardrails

GUARDRAILS

Do you remember the last time you saw a dangerous condition at a runway, stairway or around a floor, roof or wall opening, because of no guardrails? Unfortunately, many of you can recall working on projects where guardrails were either installed late or not at all. But worse yet, some of you are on one of these projects right now!

The conditions on construction projects change quickly. Areas that didn't require guardrails yesterday, may need them today. Avoid building boobytraps. Make guardrail installation a part of doing the job, not a follow-up task when time permits.

In the construction industry, falls are our worst enemy. They kill approximately 1000 and inflict disabling injuries on 100,000 of your co-workers annually!

Guardrails are not a luxury, they're an OSHA requirement. Remember that any guardrail worth building, is worth building right. Floor to top of rail must be 42" with posts not exceeding 8' centers. A 4" high toe board, strong enough to stop tools, materials, etc. from rolling or being knocked over the edge, is a must. All guardrails must be built strong enough to withstand a 200 pound force in any direction.

The minimum requirements for wooden rails are 2" x 4" stock for posts and top rail, with a 1" x 6" midrail. The material should be selected to avoid defects and splinters. If you prefer steel use 1 1/2" pipe, or 2" x 2" x 3/8" angle for posts and midrail. Other materials of equal or greater strength may be substituted, however, due to its unpredictable strength and brittleness, re-bar is NOT an acceptable material for use as guardrails.

Guardrails can be taken for granted. When you find yourself reaching out for something to grab hold of as you fall, then it's too late to think about guardrails. Check for guardrails in areas that they might be needed now. On equipment, stairs, anywhere required. And make sure that they are in good condition.

Safety devices alone do not prevent accidents. You have to use common sense and THINK SAFETY.

Safety Recommendations: _____

Job Specific Topics: _____

M.S.D.S Reviewed: _____

Attended By: _____

affiliated with Associated Builders & Contractors, Empire State Chapter

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