

# Toolbox Talk

## Falls on the Same Level

It is no secret that Falls are among the leading causes of injuries and fatalities in the construction industry. As 1 of the Focus Four, it has been a top priority for training and citations nationwide since 2016.

OSHA estimates that on average 202,066 work days are lost every year for workers recovering from injuries from a fall.

A surprising number of falls happen on the same level or from less than 4 feet off the ground. These falls often come with injury because of a lack of precautions and a false sense of security.

Falls from higher levels tend to happen less frequently because people take extra precautions and are more careful.

### Falls on the Same Level

Slips, Trips, and Falls where the worker either impacts an object or the floor they are walking on. Slips and Trips are the most common "Fall" because they can happen in any industry at any time.

- Wet, Icy, or Snow covered surfaces
- Uneven terrain
- Oily or Greasy floors
- Cracks, Chips, or Raised Edges on a walking surface
- Minor changes in elevation
- Objects in the path like cords, hoses, rugs, and scrap materials

*Our muscle memory can cause us to trip. When climbing stairs, if the first 3 rises are exactly the same, but the 4th rise is 1/8" taller, you will trip over it almost every time.*

### Best Practices to Prevent Incidents

- Keep your workspace clean and organized. Good Housekeeping can eliminate most of the tripping and slipping hazards before work is started and frequently throughout the day.
- Focus - Try not to be distracted when walking through a worksite. Keep your head on a swivel.
- Keep your footwear in good condition. No loose laces, torn soles, boots caked with mud or snow.
- Proper lighting for walking and working areas.

### Summary

Trips and Slips are considered Falls. Though we are not required to wear a fall arrest system to walk around the site, it is important to protect ourselves and others from simple mistakes. How often do you hear about someone slipping in the parking lot on the way into work, and they're gone for a week or more.