

TOOLBOX TALK NO.46

Openings and Edges



Every year in our industry hundreds of people are killed or injured when they fall from above. Over half of all accidents reported are falls of persons and falls of materials.

The following list gives an idea of the required protection:

Scaffolds

Guardrails and toe-boards must be provided to all working levels, also secured ladders are required.

Floors

Protection must be provided to all floor edges, lift openings, stairways and duct openings.

Roofs

Edge protection must be given at the eaves and gable.

Safe Working on Roofs

- i. Only competent operatives may be used for roofing work.
- ii. Crawling boards or ladders must be provided and used where the roof is liable to collapse under a person's weight or the roof is sloping with a pitch over 10 degrees.
- iii. Where work is of short duration and the provision of guard-rails and toe boards is impracticable, safety harnesses must be used with suitable anchorage points provided.
- iv. If using bitumen boilers, they require a drip tray.
- v. Openings must be covered or guarded, if removed for the passage of workers or materials, replace immediately

Excavations

All excavations require warning barriers or guardrails. Where the sides are sloping, barriers may be sufficient but if sides are vertical then more adequate guarding is needed. Appropriate signage and lighting may also be required.

Working Alongside Water

Guardrails and lifelines are required where work is carried out alongside rivers, docks etc.

Manholes, Road Gullies etc.

Strong secured covers are required here as vehicles damage covers and leave traps. At times protection will need to be moved to allow work to progress but this must be done in a controlled manner so that protection is re-fixed once the work is done.

If you remove protection under instruction make sure it is replaced.

Where edge protection is not practical, safety harnesses and restraint wire may be suitable, see your Supervisor for instructions.

IF YOU ARE WORKING ALONGSIDE AN UNGUARDED EDGE OR OPENING TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR IMMEDIATELY.

**SAFETY AS
STANDARD**