



Solutions for Falling Objects & Dropped Tools

Objects that fall from heights include tools, equipment, materials, and debris. Workers can be injured or killed by a falling object or dropped tool.

Hector and Nicki's Story

Hector and Nicki are building a scaffold to reach a soffit. Hector is working off the ground building the scaffold while Nicki is on the ground. As the work progresses, it becomes difficult for Hector to find good areas to stand while he works. Nicki suggests Hector place two boards across a set of runners to have a better platform to work from. Hector doesn't see the need for it and worries it will slow him down. Hector signals for Nicki to hand him a 5 ft runner. Hector is leaning over the scaffold and can't quite reach the runner. He bends over further to reach down. His hand makes contact with greasy oil on the rail. Hector loses his balance. The scaffold shakes. Hector's wrench makes contact with the rail and falls out of his tool belt. It strikes Nicki's hard hat. The jolt to the hard hat pushes Nicki's safety glasses into the bridge of her nose, resulting in a cut that requires stitches.

- ▶ What would you have done differently to prevent this injury?
- ▶ What other controls or precautions could have been used?

Remember This

- ▶ When an object falls, the force of its impact is affected by not only its weight, but by the speed it gathers on the way down. As an object falls, its speed increases. The faster the speed, the more force an object will have when it strikes its target. Even a small object like a wrench can break bones, crater hard hats, and cause death.
- ▶ Properly tether all equipment and hand tools that can be easily dropped.
- ▶ Wear proper personal protective equipment. Nicki would have been seriously injured without a hard hat. Hector would have a better grip with gloves on. Talk to your employer about getting the appropriate PPE that fits your body.
- ▶ Only work on a stable platform.
- ▶ Good housekeeping can prevent many objects from falling:
 - Clean work areas, equipment and tools. Wet or oily tools and areas are slippery.
 - Make sure everyone is aware of the danger of a dirty workspace and practice good housekeeping daily.

How can we stay safe today?

What will we do at the worksite to prevent falling or dropped objects?

1. _____

2. _____

OSHA REGULATION: 1926.501 and 502

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- ▶ Tether tools with proper tool lanyards when performing overhead work.
- ▶ Keep your worksite clean.
- ▶ Make sure your work platform is stable.
- ▶ Wear the proper personal protective equipment like gloves, hard hats, and safety glasses.