



UPDATE

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April 30, 2013

NIOSH, OSHA and CPWR-The Center for Construction Research and Training Announce Re-launch of the National Campaign to Prevent Falls

On April 28th, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training announced the re-launch of the construction fall prevention campaign, the national initiative to prevent falls at construction sites. Falls continue to be the leading cause of work-related injury and deaths in construction.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics an average of two construction workers die each day in the United States. Deaths and injuries from falls represent a major, persistent, yet preventable public health problem. In 2011, the rate of fatal injuries in construction was the second highest of any U.S. industry. Within the industry itself, falls on construction sites are the leading cause of death, accounting for 35% of deaths among private industry construction workers.

“The residential construction industry holds an important role in the economic vitality of our nation and the health of this industry is tied to the health of its workers,” said NIOSH Director John Howard, M.D. “The re-launch of this campaign demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that contractors and workers stay safe on the job by providing the knowledge and tools they need.”

“As the nation’s economy grows we are seeing a steady increase in new construction activity and an influx of new, inexperienced workers,” said Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health. “Falls are the leading cause of death in construction so it is vitally important for employers to provide the right equipment and properly train their workers in a language they understand so they can do their jobs safely. Falls can be prevented and lives can be saved by planning ahead to get the job done safely, providing the right equipment and training workers to use the equipment safely.”



Over the first year of the campaign, NIOSH and OSHA collaborated on the development of a number of resources to promote the campaign. These and other materials are available on the NIOSH website (www.cdc.gov/niosh/construction/stopfalls.html) and the OSHA website (www.osha.gov/stopfalls). In addition, there is a central campaign website managed by CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training (www.stopconstructionfalls.com), which provides those interested in joining the campaign additional resources and information on ways they can participate. CPWR also functions as the NIOSH-supported National Construction Research Center.

“Too many times we hear the phrase, ‘it was an accident.’ We know these incidents are preventable, which means that hundreds of fall-related deaths and thousands of injuries can be prevented,” said Pete Stafford, executive director of CPWR. “Our years of data collection consistently show that falls constitute one-third of all construction fatalities, which makes falls the leading killer of construction workers. We’re eager to re-launch the campaign and see fall protection used when workers are at heights.”

The construction falls prevention campaign is a collaborative effort out of the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) program, which brings together partners from government, labor, management, and academia. The primary goal of the campaign is to raise awareness and equip contractors and workers with the information to help them prevent falls.

To learn more about the campaign and how to join NIOSH, OSHA and CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, along with all of the NORA Construction Sector Council partners, visit the campaign website at www.stopconstructionfalls.com.

NIOSH is the federal agency that conducts research and makes recommendations for preventing work-related injuries and illnesses. It was established under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. For further information, visit www.cdc.gov/niosh. For more information about CPWR, a non-profit dedicated to advancing the construction industry through safety and healthy work practices go to www.cpwr.com.

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