

# HAZARD ALERT

## FATAL FALLS IN CONSTRUCTION

### What Is the Hazard?

In 2023, the construction industry accounted for nearly half of all fatal workplace falls, slips, and trips in the United States. In Kentucky between 2015 and 2024, there were 41 fatal construction industry falls. During the same period, falls accounted for 31% of the 131 deaths in the construction industry in Kentucky.

### Fatal Falls in Construction that Occurred in Kentucky

Case 1: A 21-year-old Hispanic builder was performing bridge repair work when he slipped and fell onto exposed rebar at the construction site, impaling his torso. (2025)

Case 2: A 58-year-old carpenter was attempting to remove a piece of board from a covered porch. The ladder he was standing on kicked out and he fell, hitting his neck on a floor jack handle. (2024)

Case 3: A 36-year-old Hispanic roofer suffered a fatal fall while installing roofing on a two-story apartment building. The worker fell approximately 18 feet to a sidewalk below and died on the scene due to injuries suffered from the fall. Personal fall protection equipment (fall protection harnesses, ropes, anchorage) was available onsite but was not used by the deceased worker at the time of the incident. (2023)

[Read the full report](#)

Case 4: A 52-year-old carpenter (victim) and his co-worker were obtaining measurements in preparation for a plywood installation project in a restaurant that was under construction. The victim utilized a 6-foot fiberglass step ladder, while his co-worker utilized a 10-foot fiberglass step ladder. The victim was holding one end of a measuring tape and reaching beyond the ladder side rails when his ladder overturned. He fell and struck the concrete surface below. (2023)

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### Recommendations for Employers:

- Perform a pre-job hazard analysis at every job site to identify potential fall hazards. Develop a plan to address hazards. Train workers to recognize hazards and use control measures effectively. Develop a rescue plan for every site.
- Use guardrails or a fall arrest system when working more than 10 feet above a lower level.
- Assign and train a person to inspect fall protection equipment, ladders, and scaffolds before each use.
- Train employees to use ladders and fall arrest systems properly. Conduct checks to ensure that employees are using equipment properly.
- Install temporary guardrails or barriers around skylights and holes.
- Use the safest equipment for the job. Consider using a scaffold or aerial lift instead of a ladder. The guardrails and wider work platform can reduce the risk of falling.
- Guard all ends of steel rebar with rebar caps or wooden troughs.

# RESOURCES

Name of Resource	Resource Description	Resource Link
Prevent Construction Falls from Roofs, Ladders, and Scaffolds	NIOSH fact sheet that gives recommendations and resources to help employers, safety professionals, and workers prevent fall injuries and deaths from roofs, ladders, and scaffolds.	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2019-128/default.html">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2019-128/default.html</a>
National Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction	Website with construction industry fall prevention resources in English and Spanish.	<a href="https://stopconstructionfalls.com/home/">https://stopconstructionfalls.com/home/</a>
Plan. Provide. Train.	OSHA fall prevention educational materials and resources for workers and employers in English and Spanish.	<a href="https://www.osha.gov/stop-falls/educational-resources">https://www.osha.gov/stop-falls/educational-resources</a>

## SOURCES

1. Fatal Falls in the Construction Industry in 2023. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2026). <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2025/fatal-falls-in-the-construction-industry-in-2023.htm>.
2. Kentucky Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation program. (2026). Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center.



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