Dropped Objects on the Job Stats & Facts



FACTS

1. Tool weighing only 8 pounds falling from a height of 200 feet will travel at a speed of approximately 80 mph and can have an impact force of 5,540 pounds when it impacts the ground. Resulting from this impact, safety nets and drop zones are of little benefit when an object of mass and speed makes a direct impact or deflects off of another object.
2. A dropped wrench, hammer or even a walkie-talkie can be extremely damaging to your fellow workers engaged in heavy manufacturing, transportation or metalworking. It can be even worse for heavier tools that are frequently used in these or other types of industries.
3. Any time people work at height, dropped objects are possible. They can pose a real danger to other workers or bystanders on the ground. Even small, seemingly innocent tools and materials are hazardous when dropped from above.
4. Where fall protection equipment prevents the person from falling, a dropped object prevention plan protects people on the ground from items that can fall off of equipment or a worker.
5. While the risk of dropping an object may seem insignificant or a prevention plan superficial, consider that your conscious mind is similar to a binary computer; able to process only one thought at a time. When performing a given task, your brain is busy sorting information relevant to that task, say, stocking inventory 30 feet above the surface. It is not actively processing anything other than the task at hand.

STATS

- According to BLS, there are more than 42,400 “struck by falling object” OSHA recordable incidents every year in the United States. That’s nearly 116 injuries caused by a dropped object every day or one injury caused by a dropped object every 10 minutes.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics categorized 278 fatalities in 2017 as resulting from being “struck by falling objects.” (OSHA) includes “struck by object” among its “Fatal Four,” the top causes of more than half of construction worker deaths.
- (BLS) reported that in 2017, “fatal falls were at their highest level in the 26-year history of the CFOI, accounting for 887 (17 percent) of worker deaths.”
- BLS reported that being struck by falling objects or equipment resulted in 45,940 injuries in 2017 (5.2% of all workplace injuries).
- According to the OSHA dropped objects are the third leading cause of injuries in construction.

- In 2016, dropped objects resulted in 255 worker fatalities, according to the BLS. The issue is one of OSHA’s “Fatal Four” causes of construction deaths, accounting for 9.4% of fatal injuries in the industry.
- The number of nonfatal falling object-related injuries reported in 2016 was 47,920. Dropped objects, according to BLS data, is the third-leading cause of injuries on jobsites.