

EMPLOYEE HANDOUT

Working at Heights: Fall Prevention Safety

The goal of this Safety Talk is to reduce the number of worker injury incidents due to working at heights. Falls from heights can result in serious injury or death and most of these incidents are due to improper use of PPE or lack of training. In winter conditions, bulky clothing, gloves and boots make moving more difficult. When combined with icy, slippery surfaces, the risk is further increased.

It is critical to complete the appropriate training and follow all safety procedures when working on a platform, tower, ladder, or roof with a height hazard – note at 10 feet (3 meters) and above (or where serious injury could occur), fall protection systems are required by regulation. If you feel uncertain about working at heights, be sure to speak to your supervisor prior to beginning the work.

Safety Tips

Complete all necessary **training requirements** for working at heights and review appropriate work and rescue plans. Discuss your plan with your supervisor and colleagues. Ensure training **logs and records** are maintained (signed off by employee and supervisor).

Inspect all safety gear for worn surfaces and stitching, and check that all devices are in good working order. Make sure that the anchor is adequate and correctly positioned. Ladders should be in good condition and positioned solidly.

Ensure the **area is safe to work in**, be aware of your environment and surroundings, including ice build up, slope angle and surfaces. Watch for sharp or protruding structures that could damage safety lines or create tripping and impact hazards. Inspect guardrails and assess the distance and angle from your anchor. Consider how your fall would be arrested and where you would end up. Adjust your safety gear to ensure a fall would not result in injury.

Make sure you have all the **necessary tools** and materials and are familiar with the task to be completed before you ascend to height. If you have to climb, use a backpack or a pulley to raise/lower your gear, so that your hands are free while you are moving. Climb or move across your platform with **3-point contact** at all times.

When ascending/descending or working at heights **take your time**. Body positions when working at height are often unbalanced and awkward, which can increase your risk of slipping, falling or strain type injuries.

If you become fatigued, take a short break and gently move the fatigued or stiff muscles/joint to release residual tension.

Ask for help when necessary. If you can't reach something or the load is too great, the risk of losing your balance is increased.

Re-evaluate periodically. Changing weather, surface conditions, your own focus and physiological status change and can affect your ability to move safely.

Posture is critical to the way that your muscles and joints carry load, and your ability to move well on slippery surfaces. Make sure to set your posture to neutral and activate your core prior to ascending to height.

Ensure you are Fit for Duty. Maintain your **health and wellness** at all times. Come to work **well rested, hydrated and fed**. These things will help you maintain your focus and make good decisions.

Dress in appropriate layers for the conditions. Ensure you have appropriate **hand coverings** to allow for the level of dexterity required to complete your task, and also to provide sufficient warmth. Metal surfaces are often slippery and transfer the cold, and heights can expose you to severe weather conditions. **Footwear** must allow the necessary ankle movement and have slip-resistant soles or cleats in good condition.

Additional Resources

- Your ski area policy and procedures.
- [WorkSafeBC: Fall Protection Resources](#)
- Ski Safety Talk: [Slips, Trips & Falls](#)
- More Ski Area Resources: go2hr.ca/skisafety