

# Working at Heights- Fall protection safety

Instructor Guide

## Safety Talk Overview:

**What & Why?** Safety Talks are a method to refresh an employee’s knowledge and skills, maintain their interest in safety and illustrate the organization’s commitment to creating a healthy & safe work environment.

**Who & When?** Generally, these Safety Talk meetings are led by a supervisor, member of the JHSC, or Worker H&S Representative and should be mandatory for all crew members to attend. The content should be focused on a single topic. Safety Talks can be performed on a weekly basis or before the start of a new scope of work and should be about 15 minutes in duration.

go2HR developed this safety talk template for employers to customize and use for any topic in their organization. The Participant Handout should include information that you hope the worker will retain from the safety talk content and should be handed out during the safety talk for workers to reference later. Feel free to use it at your discretion.

**Working from Heights- Fall Protection Safety Overview**

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 Talk Outline (using the handout below):**

- Preventative Measures

- Discussion Questions

**Additional Resources:**

-[go2HR Ski Areas](https://www.go2hr.ca/health-safety/ski-areas)

-[WorkSafeBC Fall Protection](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/tools-machinery-equipment/fall-protection)

-[WorkSafeBC Ladders](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/tools-machinery-equipment/ladders)

## Topic Overview:

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## Safety Talk Facilitator Guidance

🞏 **Introduce** the topic and why it’s important

🞏 **Discuss** the associated hazards and likely incidents

🞏 **Tour** the work zone identifying hazardous areas

🞏 **Distribute** the Participant Handout

🞏 **Use** the info above to guide the discussion

🞏 **Document** the talk using the Safety Talk Record

🞏 **Explain** what controls are used to minimize the risks

🞏 **Remind** employees about applicable PPE usage

🞏 **Emphasize** the importance of safe work procedures

🞏 **Ask questions** to generate group discussion

🞏 **Answer any questions** or concerns they might have

🞏 **Set a good example** by working safely at all time

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Safety Talk Record

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Discussion Leader:** | **Date:** |
| **Department:** | Time: |

### Attendees (Please print your name and sign beside it. If you are a contractor, also include your company name):

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### Near miss/incidents and investigations reviewed: ☐ None this month

### Any questions or concerns from workers?

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action needed:** | **Person responsible:** | **Due date:** | **Completed date:** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Supervisor/Manager print name & sign:** | **Date:** |

### Reviewed by:

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**Preventative Measures**

**Training and Planning**

-Complete all necessary training requirements for working at heights

-Review appropriate work and rescue plans and discuss the plan with your supervisor and colleagues

-Ensure training logs and records are maintained and signed off by both employee and supervisor

**Safety Gear and Equipment Inspection**

-Inspect all safety gear for worn surfaces and inspect ladders for good condition/solid positioning

-Check that all devices are in good working order and ensure the anchor is adequate and correctly positioned

**Environmental Awareness**

-Ensure the work area is safe, considering factors like ice build-up, slope angle, and surfaces

-Watch for sharp or protruding structures that could damage safety lines or create hazards

-Inspect guardrails and assess distance and angle from the anchor

-Consider fall arrest scenarios and adjust safety gear accordingly

**Task Preparation and Movement**

-Ensure all necessary tools and materials are available and familiarize yourself with the task before ascending

-Use a backpack or pulley to raise/lower gear, keeping hands free while moving and maintain 3-point contact

**Work Practices at Heights**

-Take your time when ascending, descending, or working at heights and take short breaks if fatigued

-Be mindful of unbalanced and awkward body positions that increase the risk of slipping or falling

-Ask for help when necessary to prevent loss of balance

-Periodically re-evaluate conditions like weather, surface conditions, and personal focus or fatigue

**Physical Preparation and Personal Well-being**

-Set posture to neutral and activate core muscles before ascending

-Ensure you are Fit for Duty by maintaining health and wellness; come to work well-rested, hydrated, and fed

-Dress in appropriate layers for conditions and ensure hand coverings provide dexterity and warmth

-Choose footwear with slip-resistant soles or cleats and allow necessary ankle movement

**Discussion**

-What steps will you take to ensure clear communication and coordination with colleagues while working at heights?

-What are any identified site-specific challenges that may affect your ability to work at heights safely?

-What environmental factors do you consider when working at heights?

Participant Handout

### For more information on this topic or if you have questions, contact: