PREVENTING FALLS

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| Slips, trips and falls are no laughing matter. In fact, they can be deadly: According to the [2017 edition of Injury Facts](http://injuryfacts.nsc.org/), an NSC chartbook, 660 workers died in 2014 after a fall from heights, and 138 workers died from a fall on the same level.Slip, trip and fall hazards may be easy to overlook, especially when working in familiar surroundings and conditions. It is important to stay vigilant.*Falls on the same level:*If there is an apparent slip, trip or fall hazard, don’t assume someone else will deal with it. “You can be the catalyst to make these changes happen,” NSC states. “You just need to keep your eyes open, think about the bigger picture and let someone know about your concerns.”To help prevent falls on the same level, watch the path ahead and don’t walk too fast; avoid distractions, such as talking on a cellphone while walking; wear shoes that are appropriate for the job; and be alert for changes in elevation. Additionally, clean up spills as soon as they are seen and, if working outside, pay attention to weather conditions.*Falls from height:*Falls from heights often are deadlier than falls on the same level. One industry where fall-related deaths are common is construction. According to OSHA, of the 991 construction fatalities recorded in 2016, 370 were the result of falls to a lower level. Recommended safety precautions for anyone working at height:* Conduct a job hazard analysis and have a fall prevention plan in place before starting a job.
* Wear – and know how to use – proper fall protection equipment.
* Ensure necessary fall prevention systems such as guardrails are in place.
* When using a ladder, ensure the base is on a firm, solid surface, and maintain three points of contact with the ladder.
* Never use a ladder during windy or inclement weather.
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