



Fall Protection Training Guidebook

From the Field

By Tony Smith, ISRI Safety Outreach Director

Gravity is a force that we are all bound to and falling or having an object fall on us is something that we all try to avoid. Fall hazards are around us every day. Recognizing the areas at your work location that put people and objects in danger of a fall is the first step in creating a safer work environment for everyone. Putting steps, guardrails, or other fall protection systems in place to take away the hazard will make your workplace safer. Using ladders that are designed for the environment that you are working in is important to the health and safety of your employees. Stray power cords and tools create unnecessary trip and fall hazards. Round objects such as cans or stray scrap material may pose a slip and roll hazard that can cause a fall or twist an ankle. By simply using the three point method when climbing up, down, on, or off of an object you can help to prevent a slip, trip, or fall. Understanding the value of good housekeeping is a must to prevent slips, trips, and falls.

There are many traps in life that create hazardous situations. It is part of your job to know and understand where these so called traps lie. Hazard recognition is a big part of being safe in your everyday life. Another name many people use for hazard recognition is "Life Experience". Here are several resources that have been shared with me. They cover walking and working surfaces, ladder safety, and fall protection subjects. These should be used to teach people within your company about the hazards, or traps, that they may encounter in the scrap recycling industry. Falls are preventable if we understand where and how they might occur. Preparation and awareness are keys to helping to remove these hazards from your jobsite. Work safely at heights, or not at all.



Why Are Falls Dangerous?

Falls are dangerous because of three primary elements:

- The free-fall distance the worker falls
- The shock absorption at impact
- The body weight of the worker

What Happens During a Fall?

- Free-fall velocity at impact when falling 12 feet is nearly 20 M.P.H.
- Person hits the ground in less than one second from this distance

When Must You Use Fall Protection?

- Must use fall protection if working \geq 4ft. off ground

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Ways to Prevent Falls

Preventing slips, trips, and falls are more than common sense. They usually are the result of strict company policies and engineering controls with the ultimate goal of hazard elimination. The prevention of slip trip and falls is the responsibility of everyone within the company, not just management and not just the employees. Review the following safe work practices:

- Encourage employee wellness programs and stretching exercises.
- Ensure dock plates are functioning properly.
- Provide adequate lighting in and around work areas.
- Equip freight beds with handholds and stepladders.
- Prohibit workers jumping off equipment and docks.
- Ensure walkways and work areas are clear of trip hazards.
- Post walkway signage in work areas.
- Install and use tarping stations when applicable.
- Install fall protection systems when applicable.
- Keep shipping doors closed until trucks are parked and wheels are chocked.
- Require non-skid footwear for all drivers and dock personnel with no exceptions.
- Promptly investigate all slip, trip and falls to prevent future incidents.
- Apply self-adhesive anti-slip tape to the hand rails entering the cabs.
- Keep high-work areas free from tools, materials, debris, liquids, and other items that could cause people to trip.



Reporting Fall Hazards

When fall conditions exist:

- Take short steps
- Keep toes pointed out
- Walk on the whole foot when crossing rough or slippery surfaces
- Avoid making sharp turns
- If you fall, protect your head and neck

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Fall Protection Quiz

1. How high above the ground or walking level can you get before fall protection is required?
2. What must you do before putting on a full body harness or lanyard?
3. Name 2 types of fall protection devices.
4. Besides a toprail and midrail, what must a guardrail have?
5. A full body harness and lanyard are required in a forklift manbasket:
True or False
6. A forklift manbasket does not need to be secured to the mast if the forklift is equipped with fork spreaders:
True or False
7. After a fall, a shock-absorbing lanyard that has been deployed may be re-used as long as it passes inspection:
True or False
8. A full body harness and lanyard are required in an aerial lift:
True or False
9. Good housekeeping practices are an important part of preventing falls:
True or False
10. How many steps can you have before you need handrails?
11. What's the first thing you do when you're putting on a full body harness?



(Fall Protection Quiz Continued)

12. When is it okay to use a ladder that came in with a scrap load?
13. How far above the landing or roof line should a ladder extend?
14. How tall should a standard guardrail be?
15. What's a good way prevent falls from mobile equipment?

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Fall Protection Quiz Answers

1. Four feet.
2. Inspect it. Discard if any defects are found.
3. Body harness, lanyard, handrails.
4. A four-inch toeboard.
5. True.
6. False.
7. False. It must be discarded once deployed.
8. True.
9. True.
10. Four.
11. Inspect it.
12. Never.
13. 3 feet. (Secure side rails at the top when 3 foot extension is not possible.)
14. 42" (with a midrail and 4" toeboard).
15. Use a 3-point contact when mounting and dismounting.



Ladder Safety

- Each year, over 160,000 people are injured as a result of falls from ladders.
- More than 300 people die each year due to not following safe work practices with ladders.
- A stepladder is intended for use by only one person working on a level surface. It requires level support for all 4 rails. If this worksite condition does not exist, a stepladder is not the right tool for the job.
- If the work to be done is near an electrical power source, or requires the use of electrical power tools an aluminum ladder must not be used.
- Do Not stand on the top step, bucket shelf, or top cap of a stepladder.
- Do Not exceed the Duty Rating of the ladder: Compare the posted Duty Rating to your body weight plus the weight of your clothing, PPE, tools and equipment, and anything stored or hanging on the ladder.
- Remember: There is no relationship between the ladder length and its weight capacity. A longer ladder does not necessarily have a higher weight capacity.
- Thoroughly inspect the worksite AND ladder before working with any ladder.
- Damaged ladders must be taken out of service. Never use a damaged ladder.
- When carrying a ladder, keep the leading edge slightly higher than the trailing end.
- Never use a stepladder with the spreader in a closed or partially closed position.
- Always face front on the ladder when mounting and dismounting.
- Keep 3 points of contact while climbing or descending a ladder (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand).
- Keep both your hands free while climbing a ladder. Tools and other items should be raised by tow lines or other means.
- Use the Belt Buckle Rule: keep your body positioned such that your belt buckle stays between the side rails of the ladder. Don't overreach. Overreaching is one of the most common causes of ladder accidents.
- Never jump or slide down from the ladder or climb more than one step at a time.
- Never straddle the ladder or sit on the top cap.
- Never move a ladder while someone's on it. Get down and move it.

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(Ladder Safety Continued)

- Extend the top of the ladder three feet above the landing.
- Keep ladders free of any slippery materials.
- Make sure foot pads are in place and in good working condition.
- Never stack a ladder on any other objects such as boxes, barrels, or scaffolds to reach more height.

Here's What You Should NOT Do with a Ladder:

- Place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or unstable bases.
- Use a ladder on soft ground or unstable footing.
- Exceed the ladder's maximum load rating.
- Tie two ladders together to make them longer.
- Ignore nearby overhead power lines.
- Move or shift a ladder with a person or equipment on the ladder.
- Lean out beyond the ladder's side rails.
- Use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.
- Pull a ladder out of the scrap pile.

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Ways to Correct Slips, Trips, and Falls

- Regularly watch out for new slip, trip and fall hazards that can crop up and address sudden changes that can increase your workers' chances of falling on the job.
- Ask your workers if they have noticed that their balance isn't quite what it once was. If any want to speak out about changes they have noticed in their balance, encourage them to do so.
- Institute a "Stop Work Policy."
- Do you make accommodations for older workers by assigning climbing related tasks to your younger workers? If not, you should consider doing so to help your older workers stay safe on the job.
- Stress the importance of wearing footwear that has plenty of tread and is in good condition. Demonstrate the difference in traction between a proper pair of safety footwear and a worn pair.