

WEEKLY TOOLBOX TALK: WAR ON FALLS

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The “War on Falls” was declared with only one thing in mind – **to prevent injuries by eliminating fall exposures**. Zero tolerance and suspensions are merely tools to deal with a violation after it occurs. The ultimate goal is eliminate the exposure in the first place. That can only be accomplished by each and every one of us understanding what is expected. Here are some of the reasons that have been documented through past violations:

1. I just forgot
2. I was just going to be there for a second
3. It would have taken too much time to stop and get another piece of equipment to do it right
4. I was almost done, and I just needed to finish this one last area
5. I was just trying to make production and get the job done
6. I didn’t have, or couldn’t find, the right ladder/scaffold on the job
7. I didn’t know any other way to do the job

We must never expect greater production at the expense of safety. We must produce the work to make money. However, do not ever confuse the fact that we never expect greater production at the expense of safety. **Safety is always the number one objective!!**

To do any job right, it takes planning. It’s no different with safety. You don’t have to stop and look for a taller ladder if you plan and have the right one to begin with. As you are working, if you stop and plan how you are going get where you need to be and how you are going to get there, you will never “forget” where you are and what you are doing. Never forget that “just being there for a second” is not worth the risk. It only takes a fraction of second to fall.

There is one more area of confusion. We understand that there are times that we just can’t reach where we need to be by following the rules to the letter. There are times that the guardrails can’t be high enough, or we may have to stand on the midrail of a lift, or even step up on the top step of a ladder. Number one, when you find yourself in that type of situation, **don’t make the decision without first talking with your foreman**. Secondly, don’t think that breaking a rule is ok as long as you take precautions. Exceptions to a rule are only acceptable in extreme cases where there is **no**

other alternative and your action is pre approved by the foreman. For instance, it is not ok to step up on a ladder just because your partner is holding it. If a taller ladder, scaffold, or lift can be used, that's the right thing to do.

Safety is not a matter of the quickest or easiest way to get the job done. Safety is always a matter of doing every task we do the right way, no matter what it takes.

Tags:

safety

Toolbox Talk:

Accident Prevention