

The “Fatal Four” Hazards in the Construction Industry

There is inherent risk we face every day at here at the jobsite. Construction is a dangerous field full of hazards. Despite the wide-ranging hazards construction workers face, there are four types of hazards that are responsible for most fatalities in our industry. These four types of hazards are falls, struck-by, caught-in/between, and electrocution.

Falls in Construction

In 2020, there were 351 fatal falls to a lower level out of 1,008 construction fatalities. To protect from this, we must be tied off during work at six feet of height or greater if fall prevention measures are not present.

The majority of employees who died due to a fall did not have any fall protection on or the fall protection was inadequate.

Electrocutions in Construction

Electrocutions followed falls in the cause of fatalities in our industry. There are multiple causes of electrocution fatalities. The most common types of electrocution fatalities include direct contact with an energized powerline, direct contact with energized equipment, contact between a boom and energized powerline, damaged equipment, and indirect contact with an energized powerline.

Struck-By Incidents

Struck-by incidents are responsible for almost the same number of fatalities in our industry as electrocutions each year. There are many struck-by hazards on every construction site that can severely injure or kill workers on any given day. Common struck-by incidents include struck-by moving equipment, struck-by falling objects, and struck-by flying debris.

Caught-In/Between Incidents

The last of the fatal four hazards in our industry is caught-in/between incidents. OSHA defines caught-in/between hazards as injuries resulting from a person being squeezed, caught, crushed, pinched, or compressed between two or more objects, or between parts of an object. Two examples of caught-in/between incidents include excavation cave-ins and run over by forklifts or heavy equipment.

Summary

This was just a quick overview and examples of the fatal four hazards in the construction industry. It is important that we understand that these types of hazards are responsible for the majority of injuries and fatalities in our field of work. In your work today, evaluate your work tasks and work area for these hazards and make sure to remediate any risk you see.

If our GOAL is to get the job done without getting hurt, there are three things we can do that will get us 90% of the way to that GOAL:

- **Have a PLAN**
- **Identify and MITIGATE THE HAZARDS**
- **STOP if something doesn't feel right**

Discussion points

- Which of the fatal four hazards should we be most concerned with here at our worksite?
- What are some safety measures we can take to eliminate or reduce the chance of injury related to hazards here at this worksite?

PLAN FOR HAZARDS AND STOP