



WORKING AT HEIGHT – ROOFS

Toolbox talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions on the job site.

Access to roof areas is often required to maintain equipment, complete construction work, or repair structures. Roof work can create a serious risk of falling from the roof edge or through a fragile surface. Falls from height can result in serious injury or death. Do not access or work on a roof unless a competent person has assessed the hazards and appropriate controls are in place.

Before any roof work begins, confirm that a hazard assessment, safe work procedure, and, where required, a written fall protection plan have been completed and reviewed with the workers involved. In Saskatchewan, fall protection is required where a worker may fall 3 metres or more, or where a fall from a lesser height could cause injury. Workers must be trained in the fall protection system and must use the equipment provided.

Saskatchewan occupational health and safety legislation requires employers, contractors, supervisors, and workers to take reasonable steps to protect health and safety at the workplace. This includes providing safe access to and egress from the roof, identifying hazards such as fragile surfaces and roof openings, and ensuring suitable fall protection controls are used before work starts.

Do not assume a roof is safe because there is no warning sign. Fragile surfaces, roof lights, skylights, deteriorated decking, or unsupported materials may not be obvious. Warning signs should be posted where fragile surfaces are known or suspected, but missing or damaged signage does not mean the area is safe.

	Check with your Manager, Supervisor, or Site Manager before accessing any roof structure. Do not proceed until the hazards, access method, fall protection requirements, and emergency response plan have been reviewed. All roof work must be planned. Safe access, safe egress, and a safe method of work must be established before any worker goes onto the roof. A fall from height can cause serious injury or death. Treat every roof access task as high risk.
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KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER ARE:

- ✓ Identify the roof construction, roof covering, slope, condition, openings, and any fragile surfaces before work begins.
- ✓ Confirm the fall protection controls before starting. If required controls are not in place, do not proceed.
- ✓ On flat roofs, stay on designated walkways where provided. If there are no designated walkways, confirm the safe work method before accessing the area.

- ✓ Use guardrails, travel restraint, personal fall arrest systems, safety nets, or other approved controls where required by the hazard assessment and Saskatchewan occupational health and safety requirements.
- ✓ Safe access must be provided by stairs, properly secured ladders, scaffolds, elevated work platforms, or another approved method. Makeshift access, such as climbing through windows, jumping gaps, balancing on ledges, or crossing parapets, is not safe access.
- ✓ Consider weather conditions before and during roof work. High winds, ice, snow, rain, poor visibility, or lightning may make roof work unsafe.
- ✓ If a worker is required to use a harness, lifeline, anchor, travel restraint, or other fall protection equipment, the worker must be trained and must inspect and use the equipment as instructed.
- ✓ On sloped roofs, use suitable roof ladders, crawling boards, platforms, guardrails, fall restraint, fall arrest, or other approved controls as required by the safe work plan. Confirm the expected method with your supervisor or Manager before starting.
- ✓ On fragile roofs or near fragile surfaces, do not step directly on the surface. Use suitable access equipment and fall protection controls. Ordinary scaffold planks or unsecured boards are not an acceptable substitute for a properly designed system.
- ✓ Where fall arrest equipment is used, confirm that anchor points are suitable, approved, and capable of supporting the required load. A rescue plan must be in place before the work begins.
- ✓ Secure tools, equipment, and materials while they are being moved to the roof and while they are being used.
- ✓ Protect workers and others below the roof area. Barricade the drop zone and post warning signs where there is a risk of falling objects.
- ✓ Treat roof lights, skylights, and other openings as fall hazards. Covers, guardrails, or other effective controls must be in place before workers approach or work near them.

Toolbox Attendance

Questions? _____

Concerns? _____

Days since Last Incident: _____

Supervisor/Meeting Leader: _____ Date: _____

Signatures of attendees:

Manager review comments:

Manager signature: _____ Date of Review: _____