



Weekly Safety Meeting

The Fatal 4: Struck-by

According to OSHA, struck-by incidents were the overall leading cause of workplace deaths in 2024. These types of injuries are the leading cause of injury and second leading cause of death in the construction industry.

Struck-by hazards are injuries produced by forcible contact or impact between the injured person and an object or piece of equipment. Struck-by object hazards include those that can fall, fly, swing, slip, hit, or roll. Vehicles and heavy equipment in the work zone are involved with $\frac{3}{4}$ of construction-related fatalities. Masonry wall construction is a task that is specifically dangerous due to struck-by hazards.

OSHA offers a construction eTool addressing struck-by hazards and vehicles, falling/flying objects, and constructing masonry walls here: <https://www.osha.gov/etools/construction/struck-by>

Preventing Struck-by Injuries

Vehicle Injuries

Because 75% of struck-by injuries are caused by vehicles or heavy machinery, it is worth taking a closer look at how to avoid many of these hazards.

Internal and external traffic control plans should be developed and followed. These show the direction and flow of construction and other traffic, so workers can be aware of which direction to **expect hazards**.

Audible backup alarms in vehicles emit a loud, sharp beeping noise when a vehicle is in reverse. Workers should be able to hear and heed this audible warning when working around vehicles.

Wheel chocks are wedges of heavy material like plastic, rubber, or metal that are placed against the wheel of a vehicle to prevent it from rolling. Use of chocks is both simple and effective, and should be as automatic as setting the brake for drivers who park or stop on inclines. Chocks should be $\frac{1}{4}$ the height of the vehicle tire. Multiple chocks should be used for muddy or slippery conditions.

Crane swing and lift zones should be clearly marked and avoided by ground workers.

Construction Site Injuries

There are many ways to try and avoid an in-the-job injury while working around struck-by hazards on a construction site or other worksite. The hierarchy of controls and use of adequate PPE are

fundamental. Employees should be aware of job and site hazards and their locations and ask questions if they are unsure of what hazards their job entails.

Stay alert in work areas. Be aware of a 360-degree radius around you, and especially keep in mind where the hazards are and what barriers are in place to prevent them. Don't get distracted – if that means keep your phone in your car, do that. It only takes a moment to get hit by a vehicle when you are looking down.

Be visible – wear bright, reflective vests. OSHA requires workers to wear high-visibility safety vests in certain situations – such as traffic or construction equipment exposure. For daytime workers, flagger's vests are usually blaze orange, high-vis yellow or fluorescent green, and for nighttime work, these same color vests should also be retro-reflective.

Personal protective equipment is meant to be your last line of defense against hazards that cannot be avoided through the hierarchy of controls. PPE is simple and effective. Your hard hat protects your head from falling objects and goggles prevent hazards from flying debris—hazards that cannot always be eliminated or controlled. Gloves prevent you from getting your hands cut by rebar or scraped by concrete. If you know the job entails overhead or other hazards, never ever work a job without adequate PPE.

Toeboards are an elevated edge that creates a physical barrier that prevents materials, tools, or debris from falling from an elevated work area. Toeboards are used on elevated platforms, scaffolding, walkways, roof edges, catwalks, and machine platforms to create a protective barrier. This barrier helps prevent not only falling objects (like tools, etc.), but hinders people from falling off edges as well.

Tool tethering is a way of preventing tools from being dropped or falling. When working from heights, it is advisable to attach your tools to your work belt. If there is anyone above you using tools, you should definitely wear a hard hat. Hard hats are designed to mitigate impact from above, but keep in mind hard hats do not completely prevent all head injuries.

AVOID BEING HIT...BY TRUCKS, TOOLS & EQUIPMENT!

