Preventing Falls through Holes

TOOLBOX TALK

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Holes are made in roofs and floors as buildings go up and are torn down. Workers can be injured or killed if they fall through the holes.

John and Phillip's Story

John was in the process of removing a damaged plywood sheet when Phillip, another worker, requested some supplies. Before John left to get them, he laid the damaged plywood on the floor, and it happened to cover a hole. Later, Phillip came along and picked up the plywood sheet to take it to a disposal chute. Not seeing the hole, he stepped into it and fell about 25 feet to the concrete floor below. He suffered severe injuries to his legs and back.

- ⚒ **Have you recently worked around a hole in a roof or floor?**
- ⚒ **Was the opening covered or protected with guardrails?**
- ⚒ **Have you known anyone who was injured falling through a roof or floor hole? If so, what happened?**

Remember This

- ➢ If you create, uncover, or see a hole, guard or cover it before you leave the work area. Other workers might not notice an uncovered hole and could fall through.
- ➢ Label all covers with the word "**HOLE**" or "**COVER**" to warn of the hazard.
- ➢ Keep an eye out for your co-workers. If a hole is uncovered, take action to cover it, **even if you did not create or uncover it!**
- ➢ Make sure covers can support at least two times the weight of workers, equipment, and materials. If a hole is larger than plywood, then guardrails should be used. (OSHA requires that covers be of standard strength and construction.)
- ➢ Fasten all covers with screws or nails so they do not move. If a worker steps on an unsecured cover, it can shift and the worker can fall through the hole and be injured.

How can we stay safe today?

What will we do at the worksite to prevent falls through holes?

1. _____
   _____

2. _____
   _____

OSHA REGULATION: 1926.501 and 502

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Use at least 3/4" plywood or oriented strand board and secure the wood with nails or screws.

- Guard or cover all holes you have created, uncovered, or noticed before you leave the work area.

- Label all covers with the word "**HOLE**" or "**COVER**" to warn of the hazard.

- Keep an eye out for your co-workers. If a hole is uncovered, take action to cover it, **even if you did not create or uncover it!**