

Falls a safety hazard for residential construction workers

The construction industry remains to be one of the most dangerous places for workers in the U.S. Falls are the leading cause of death for construction workers, with one-third of all construction fatalities being attributed to falls.

A new study by Washington University found that falls are more prevalent in residential construction compared to commercial construction, which is why OSHA has started an awareness campaign to try and reduce construction falls among workers.

Research has shown that construction workers usually know the safety hazards while working but have never seen any improvements to safety so they have become used to working around the hazards. This puts construction workers at an even higher risk for suffering a workplace injury or being killed on the job.

The reason residential construction is more dangerous is partly due to the fact that residential frame carpenters seem to have the highest risk of falling while working. These workers are carpenters who frame single-family homes and have a very high injury and fatalities rate in the construction industry.

Roughly 55 percent of residential construction fatalities were caused by workers falling to a lower level while they framed a residential home, according to the study. The study found that these workers face the highest risk of falling because they have to continually work in higher areas that have gaps and the companies usually don't have an on-site safety professional to address any potential hazards.

OSHA is working to raise awareness and change residential construction training to make all workers aware of fall hazards. OSHA enforcement and changing safety guidelines tend to take some time before they can be effective. Construction workers who have been injured should consult a workers' compensation attorney to discuss their case as they may be entitled to workers' compensation benefits and compensation for their injuries.

Source: OHS Online, "[Construction Fall Fatalities Can Be Prevented](#)," Bradley Evanoff, Jan. 1, 2013