

Toolbox Talk

61. Roof Access



What?

- It is sometimes necessary to gain access to roofs in order to install or repair equipment or undertake maintenance. Some roofs are flat, others are pitched and a number contain fragile material. Whenever personnel access roofs there is a danger of falling off and therefore the risk of falling needs to be properly assessed and steps taken to prevent it



Why?

- Many people die each year from falling off or through roofs, many of these accidents happen during cleaning and maintenance
- Safe roof access can be achieved by providing independent scaffolds, fixed or mobile scaffold towers, edge protection, mobile access equipment and ladders
- Due to their inherent danger, access to all roofs is restricted to authorised personnel only
- If you need to go onto roofs to repair, replace, clean or inspect them or use a roof for access you must obtain a permit. The permit will cover such things as: restricting access during bad weather, suitable access arrangements, methods of preventing falls, type and condition of roof e.g. fragile material

Do



- ✓ Check you are authorised to go onto roofs and have a permit
- ✓ Check there is suitable edge protection on flat roofs
- ✓ Pay attention to any posted safety signage at roof access point(s)
- ✓ Make sure that lighting is adequate
- ✓ Watch out for other hazards e.g. fumes from below
- ✓ Prevent items falling onto people below
- ✓ Use barriers, warning notices, 'look out' etc.
- ✓ Use fall arrest equipment near skylights or on roofs without edge protection
- ✓ Report any unsafe roof to your supervisor

Don't



- ✗ Walk or step onto on fragile materials such as asbestos, cement or glass which may have been painted over
- ✗ Walk along the valley gutters on fragile roofs unless securely attached to fall arrest equipment
- ✗ Step onto things which take you above the height of the guard rail
- ✗ Remove fall arrest equipment if there is a risk of falling



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