

Workplace Safety

## 5 Quick Tips for Passive Fall Protection

Don Sears | Mar 06, 2019

How safe is your plant when you are walking around? There are many ways to protect and prevent workers from slips, trips and falls that do not necessarily require a worker to wear protective equipment. See why and how in this passive fall protection infographic.

Falls from 10 feet or less are some of the most dangerous and frequently occurring fatalities and injuries. Passive fall protection systems, such as *guardrails, handrails, matting*, chemical-protected flooring and other “stationary” applications can really cut down on or prevent slips and trips—and can help avoid fatal falls in industrial settings.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration *updated its fall protection standards* for general industry in 2017 to help seriously reduce workplace fatalities and injuries. Lost workdays due to same-level falling injuries cost companies nearly \$11 billion a year, according to the Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index.



*Need to figure out worker injury costs today? Use our simple and interactive workplace injury cost calculator.*

### What Is a Passive Fall Protection System?

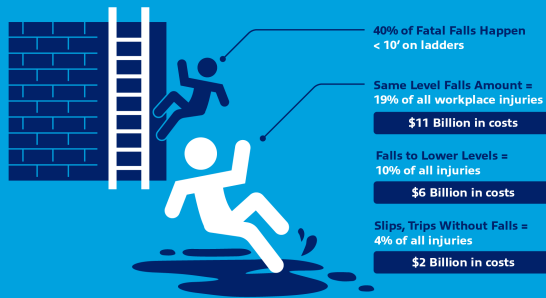
Whether by having something to grab on to or by having the right kind of traction under foot, passive fall protection systems should not be overlooked on the plant floor—including on mezzanines and maintenance ladders. A fall protection system is considered “passive” because you do not necessarily wear it on your body. In other words, a passive fall protection system means protection that remains fixed whether a worker is using it or not—it’s just there. It doesn’t need the worker to take an action or wear personal protective equipment, or “PPE,”—such as harnesses, lanyards, helmets or other bodily gear.

Here are five easy-to-understand and easy-to-incorporate tips for passive fall protection.

# 5 Quick Tips for Passive Fall Protection

There's a lot more to fall protection than falls from great heights—especially in general industry. Passive systems, such as guardrails, handrails, matting and other 'stationary' applications can really help slips, trips and falls. Here are five fall protection tips for passive fall protection.

## 1 Understand Today's Workplace Slips, Trips & Falls



## 2 Before You Do Anything, Get a Hazard Assessment

### OSHA's Best Practices in Six Steps

1. Collect existing info about hazards
2. Inspect hazards
3. Identify health hazards
4. Investigate incidents
5. Identify emergency and nonroutine situations
6. Document hazard details, plan interim measures and prioritize controls



## 3 Understand the Latest Standards and Rules

**January 2017:**  
OSHA updates CFR 1910.21  
Fall protection and walking-  
working surfaces standards

**202,066**  
serious  
'lost-workday'  
injuries

**345**  
fatalities occur  
annually

**New Rule Will Prevent:**  
**29**  
fatalities  
**5,842**  
lost-workday  
injuries

### 'Voluntary' ANSI Standards to Know

1264.1  
Walking/Working  
Surfaces and Their  
Access; Workplace, Floor,  
Wall and Roof Openings;  
Stairs and Guardrail/  
Handrail Systems

**Benefit:**  
Requires facilities to  
perform a fall hazard  
assessment.

1264.2  
Slip Resistance on  
Walking/Working  
Surfaces

**Benefit:**  
Standard fleshes  
out rules  
with concrete  
parameters

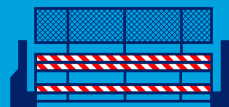


## 4 But Know What the Standards Might Miss

ANSI STANDARD 1264.1

### Does not give details on:

- Illumination on stairways and walking surfaces
- Access and working surfaces on machinery
- Debris or water on stairs
- Flooring hazards for same-level surfaces
- Distracted walking



## 5 Know Your 'Same Level' Risks

- Water
- Falling debris and objects
- Wiring
- Open areas

Slips, trips and falls can be reduced:



## **Spotlight on Fall Protection and Safety**

Here are the top articles on fall protection, PPE and safety on Better MRO:

*Video: 4 Ways to Stop Falls from Height and Improve Fall Protection*

*5 Things About Fall Protection You Need to Think About*

*Fall Protection Spotlight: Safety Railings and OSHA Guardrail Requirements*

*Q&A: John Dony, NSC, on OSHA Top 10 and Safety Culture*

*5 Must-Know Tips for Fall Protection Training*

*Workplace Injury Infographic: Take Fall Protection Seriously*

*Top Tips for Managing OSHA's 2018 Top 10 Violations*

*How OSHA Guardrail Requirements Protect Against the Leading Edge for Falls*

*How to Find the Right Protective Eyewear*

*PPE Selection: Find the Right Type of Respirator*

*How well is your plant using passive fall protection systems today? Where do you think you can improve?*

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