**Residential framers: How to prevent falls**

**The facts**
In the last ten years there have been nearly 1,000 lost-time injuries in the rough and framing carpentry sector, and five deaths since 2005.

Workers: if you fall, it could lead to a long recovery time, a poor quality of life, loss of income which will never be recovered, and even death.

Supervisors and employers: An injury on the jobsite can lead to loss of productivity, a WSIB surcharge, and Ministry of Labour fines. If you were knowingly permitting people to work in unsafe conditions, you could face criminal charges. Your company could go out of business.

Those are the facts. Here are ways to prevent you, your employees, and others from getting hurt.

**Floor openings**
If you see an opening in a floor, cover it, secure it, and mark it appropriately.

**Guardrails**
If you see a guardrail that is not right, fix it. If you see that a guardrail is needed, stop what you are doing and put it up. You can install guardrail posts and rails on the first and second floor walls before putting them up. This way when you go up to install the floor joists and sheeting you will already be protected. You can also install platform systems to avoid working off ladders.

**Housekeeping**
If you see something on the ground that could cause someone to trip, stop, pick it up and throw it away. Don’t wait for someone else to do it.

**Access**
If there isn’t clear access to the house or basement, stop and set it up. Put down ramps (with cleats) or set up stairs (with a guardrail) to the ground level. Use ladders or temporary stairs with a guardrail to the basement.
Employers

• Create a culture where a fall is unacceptable.
• Have your workers trained in fall protection.
• Go to your jobsites. Make your presence felt.
• Support the efforts of your supervisors when they enforce the rules.
• Include enough time in the schedule to complete the work safely.
• Have enough workers available to do the job safely.

For more information about preventing falls, including our Working at Heights—Fundamentals of Fall Protection training program, visit www.ihsa.ca.

Supervisors

• Train your workers. A competent person must train workers on fall-protection basics, as well as the specific fall-protection situations and equipment on your project.
• Inspect the site frequently for any trip, slip, or fall hazards. It is your responsibility to have knowledge of any potential or actual dangers to health and safety on your site.

Fall protection

If you have to work at height and you cannot be protected by guardrails or floor covers, wear your fall-protection equipment. If you see others not wearing it, let them know they should. It is a worker’s responsibility under the law to use and wear protective equipment and to report any safety concerns to your supervisor or employer.

Employers

• Enforce the rules. Enforce the construction regulation and your company’s policies when it comes to fall protection. If workers are ignoring procedures—such as tying off—insist that they follow the procedures and explain the consequences of ignoring them. Don’t be afraid to take disciplinary action when necessary. You and your company can’t afford to tolerate workers who continue to put themselves, other workers, and the business at risk.