Guardrails

List fall hazards on site.

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Well-anchored posts are essential. You can use vertical shoring jacks, screw-clamp posts, clamp binding posts, or posts that fit into sleeves cast right in the slab.

Sometimes guardrails have to be removed to land material or make installations along floor or roof edges. The open edge should be roped off and marked with warning signs. Workers inside that area must wear fall protection and be tied off.

All guardrails—especially wood guardrails—should be inspected regularly.

There’s always the danger that someone will pick up the plywood to use somewhere else. Workers have even removed covers from openings and then fallen through.

That’s why covers should be clearly marked in bright paint with warning signs. DANGER! DO NOT REMOVE! DO NOT LOAD!

Guardrails must be installed no more than 30 cm (1 foot) from the open edge. They must be able to withstand all loads specified in section 26.3(5) of the Regulation for Construction Projects (213/91).

Guardrails must have:

- a top rail, mid rail, and toeboard secured to vertical supports
- a top rail between 0.9 m (3 feet) and 1.1 m (3 feet 7 inches) high
- a toeboard at least 100 mm (4 inches) high—89 mm (3 1/2 inches) high if made of wood—and installed flush with the surface
- posts no more than 2.4 metres (8 feet) apart.

Guardrails can also be wire rope and manufactured systems of metal frames and wire mesh.

Explain dangers

Falls are the number one cause of serious injuries and death from injuries in construction.

Identify controls

Guardrails are often the best and most convenient means of fall protection.

Where possible, guardrails must be installed
- along the open edges of roofs and floors
- on formwork, scaffolds, and other work surfaces
- around openings in floors, roofs, and around skylights
- wherever workers are exposed to the risk of falling.

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Demonstrate

Review the types of guardrails used on site. Ask your workers where else guardrails should be installed.