

CONSTRUCTION NEWS SENSE



See page
2 for an
article on
Ladder
Safety



KEEPING AN EYE ON YOUR BUDDY (CO-WORKERS)

Anyone who has ever been involved in a construction accident or in an accident review has an idea of the toll it takes on everyone. Accidents can result in financial hardships and can be mentally and emotionally devastating for family and friends if severe injury or death occurs. We've all done things we felt were not safe and probably would not have done had we known someone was watching.



My point is let's start looking out a little more for our co-workers, not to the extent we stop being focused on our own tasks but in a way that we notice when something does not look quite right and we inform those around us. A simple, polite reminder could save a buddy from injury or even death. I used to be afraid and a little nervous about letting someone else know my concerns about the way they were performing a task on the job site. After a while, I realized the benefit of speaking up or doing something to prevent an accident was far better than the guilt of knowing I could have prevented it had I not remained silent.

If we all do the best we can safetywise and look out for one another, I believe we can maintain a safe work environment for everyone. Don't be afraid to speak up to your co-workers in a friendly, courteous manner to alert them to dangers. In your personal life and on the job, think positively and be aware of hazards. Every once in a while, keep an eye out for your buddy, too, and everyone will go home as healthy as when they arrived. Remember, we need you, your co-workers need you, and most of all, your loved ones need you.

Mike Pacheco,
BBS Construction Steering Committee

PEDESTRIAN/HEAVY EQUIPMENT INTERACTION

Many of you may have noticed the large number of street and pedestrian walkway construction projects throughout the SNL campus. Earthmovers and other types of heavy equipment are frequently present on these sites, and pedestrian/vehicle detours around the sites sometimes increase the possibility of interaction between pedestrians and heavy equipment.

Because of their size and operator blind spots, the machines are equipped with either a high-pitched backup alarm or the areas in which they are operating are barricaded. Detours around such areas are laid out to prevent pedestrians from entering. Recently, however, heavy equipment operators have reported construction workers as well as pedestrians have been entering construction areas and walking in the path of construction equipment and vehicles, even while backup alarms are sounding.

As a pedestrian, to avoid an accident with heavy equipment, please observe the following safety guidelines:

- Make eye contact with the operator.
- Always look where you are walking (Eyes on Path).
- Observe pedestrian or vehicle detour signs and construction barricades.
- Listen and watch for construction activities.
- Be aware some heavy equipment has a large swing radius and may impede a road or pedestrian pathway.
- If you must cross the path of construction equipment in operation, it a good idea to wait until the operator or a spotter has seen you and signals you to continue.

If a detour or pedestrian path around a construction area is unclear or you have any other safety concerns, please contact the Non-Emergency ES&H Concern line at 844-6515.

Bruce Bryant, 04844



Sandia National Laboratories



Publisher: Linda Sells, Org. 04844

What's in an Angle - Fixed Ladder Safety

Sandia construction had a recent event with a fixed ladder. While climbing the fixed ladder the worker's hand slipped causing worker to fall. Upon investigation new lessons learned became apparent. While we are trained to inspect and consider the angle of ladders as it relates to portable ladders due to slide-out from the base of the ladder, this is but one consideration. Slippage at the ladder base is one of the most common sources of accidents involving straight portable ladders. However the recent event emphasized the need to take extra caution on fixed ladders due to the fact that a ladder angle of a 75 degree (portable ladder) is easier to climb than a 90 degree (fixed Ladder) angle ladder. The 90 degree fixed ladders simply put more pressure on the upper body and hands.

We are aware that a fixed ladder is a ladder permanently attached to a structure, building or equipment. A point to remember is that fixed ladders, with a length of more than 20 feet to a maximum unbroken length of 30 feet shall be equipped with cages or a ladder safety device.

A "cage" is a guard that is fastened to the side rails of the fixed ladder or to the structure to encircle the climbing space of the ladder for the safety of the person who must climb the ladder. Cages shall extend a minimum of 42 inches above the top of a landing, unless other acceptable protection is provided. Cages shall extend down the ladder to a point not less than 7 feet and not more than 8 feet above the base of the ladder.



A ladder safety device is any device, other than a cage or well, designed to eliminate or reduce the possibility of accidental falls and may incorporate such features as life belts, friction brakes, and sliding attachments. Another feature of fixed ladders is the landing platform which provides a means of interrupting a free fall and serves as a resting place during long climbs. When fixed ladders are used to ascend to heights exceeding 20 feet (except on chimneys), landing platforms shall be provided for each 30 feet of height or fraction thereof, when cages are used, except that, where no cage, well, or ladder safety device is provided, landing platforms shall be provided for each 20 feet of height or fraction thereof. Ladder safety devices may be used on tower, water tank, and chimney ladders over 20 feet in unbroken length in lieu of cage protection. No landing platform is required in these cases.

The preferred pitch of fixed ladders shall be considered to come in the range of 75 degrees and 90 degrees with the horizontal. Fixed ladders shall be considered to be substandard if they are installed within the pitch range of 60 and 75 degrees with the horizontal. Substandard fixed ladders are permitted only where it is found necessary to meet conditions of installation. This substandard pitch range shall be considered as a critical range to be avoided, if possible. Ladders having a pitch in excess of 90 degrees with the horizontal are prohibited.

As with all ladders, fixed ladders shall be maintained in a safe condition and inspected. We need to report and deficiencies in fixed ladders. Because of the extra force on the upper body dry conditions are optimal to prevent slippage.

Greg Kirsch 04844