



## Safety & Health

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Safety & Health Representative

### Fall Awareness and Protection Campaign Continues



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) awarded the Roofers and Waterproofers Research and Education Joint Trust Fund Trust a training grant to sponsor Roofing Industry Fall Protection Conferences around the country. Five conferences were held in Chicago, IL, and Minneapolis, MN, in 2007. Two conferences were recently held in Portland, OR. Many of the attendees included roofing contractors, superintendents, foremen and key journeymen. (See the following story for more information and pictures on the Portland conferences.)

The conferences comprise one important phase of a wide-ranging commitment by the International Union to promote fall awareness and to highlight fall protection solutions.

We've begun publishing articles in our magazine – *The Journeyman Roofer and Waterproofer* – profiling roofing jobs which employ effective fall protection techniques. Past articles have featured jobs by Charles F. Evans Company in Elmira, NY, and Feeley, McAnespie Inc. located in Boston, MA.

We are developing materials such as posters, stickers, mailers, etc to reinforce the importance of fall protection on all jobs and in all scenarios. These materials will be free of charge and available to all members, local unions, JATCs and signatory contractors.

We are also in the process of developing an area on our web site devoted entirely to fall protection – stressing the hazards, presenting fall accident scenarios, showcasing fall protection solutions and offering resources for more information.

The fall protection conferences and exhibitions, of course, have been the key to this program. We've brought together the key people – insurance industry, OSHA, engineers, contractors, superintendents, foremen, key journeymen and the fall protection equipment manufacturers – to fully discuss the issues surrounding

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OSHA 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M

FALL DISTANCE	TIME (SEC)	ARRESTING FORCE ON IMPACT
7.6 inches	0.20	512 lbs
17.0 inches	0.30	1,152 lbs
31.0 inches	0.40	2,048 lbs
4 feet	0.50	3,200 lbs
6 feet	0.62	4,800 lbs
8 feet	0.71	6,400 lbs
10 feet	0.79	8,000 lbs

\* Assumes fall stop distance = 3 inches.

**HIGH RISK OF FALLS** Falls are the number one cause of serious injury and death in roofing. More than 73% of on-the-job deaths in roofing are from falls.

**REACTION TIME** With no warning, average reaction time is 0.5 seconds. In that time, you fall 4 feet.

**SUDDEN STOPS** It's not the falling that hurts. It's the sudden stops. Once a fall begins, chances are you will stop only when you hit a lower surface. As you fall, your speed increases. Impact force increases, too.

A 200 pound roofer falling 10 feet is subject to 8,000 pounds of force on impact.

The chart at right shows the impact forces and fall times for different fall distances.

**COSTS** A single fall can cost a roofing contractor and the insurance company \$11 million. It may kill or permanent disable the roofer. For a roofer who survives a fall, the average time away from work is 8 months. That's a long time to go without a paycheck.

**DOWNLOAD A FREE BOOKLET**

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**THIS IS A DRAFT OF ONE OF SEVEN POSTERS DEVELOPED SURROUNDING FALL PROTECTION ISSUES. THESE POSTERS WILL BE 22" BY 28" IN SIZE AND IN FULL COLOR. THIS ONE ADDRESSES FALL FORCES. OTHERS WILL INCLUDE GUARD RAILS, WARNING LINE SYSTEMS, SAFETY MONITORS, PERSONAL FALL ARREST SYSTEMS, HOLE COVERS AND SLIDE GUARDS. ALL WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR FREE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL UNION.**

fall protection and address potential solutions to prevent falls, protect roofers, and improve productivity.

We hope to continue to sponsor these conferences and further develop materials and programs surrounding this nationwide campaign to reduce the incidence of falls in the roofing industry. ■