

OSHA has identified four hazards that are responsible for the majority of losses. What OSHA calls the "Focus Four Hazards" are **Fall Hazards, Caught-In-Between Hazards, Struck-By Hazards and Electrical Hazards.**



Fall Hazards

Anything that could cause a worker to lose balance and result in a fall is considered a fall hazard. Falls continue to be a leading cause of injury and death within the workplace. Examples of fall hazards include unprotected roof edges, roof and floor openings, improper scaffold construction, unsafe ladders and even poor housekeeping. Workers must recognize and avoid fall hazards by following safe work procedures and wearing the appropriate PPE, including safety footwear.

Over the last five years, F&S employees have reported 273 injuries related to fall hazards.

- An employee stepped on to an unstable raised platform, which resulting in a fall. The employee sustained injuries to his shoulder, wrist and arm.
- A rotten wooden platform shattered when an employee stood on it. The employee fell approximately 12' resulting in multiple injuries.
- A broken wrist was suffered when an employee fell from a chair that was being used as a stepladder.
- An employee tripped and fell while going down loading dock steps, resulting in injured ribs.

Caught-in or -Between Hazards

A caught-in or -between hazard occurs when a person becomes caught, squeezed, crushed, pinched, or compressed between two or more objects or parts of an object. Unguarded moving machinery, unprotected excavations and trenches, working between moving materials and immovable structures, vehicles or equipment contribute to caught-in-between hazards. Workers must identify these hazards and avoid them while on the job.

Over the last five years, F&S employees reported 45 injuries as a result of being caught- in or -between equipment.

- An employee's fingers were crushed under a manhole lid when the employee's grip slipped.
- While adjusting the tension of the belts on an exhaust fan, an employee dropped a wrench. The wrench struck the power switch, turning the fan on. The employee's hand was caught in the belt and pulled into the pulley.
- While mounting a tire to a wheel, an employee's finger was crushed between the tire and the wheel.

Use machinery that is properly guarded, use proper lockout/tagout procedures, and de-energize equipment before performing maintenance. Never place yourself between moving materials, don't work in an unprotected trench, and stay out of the swing radius of cranes and other equipment.

Struck-by Hazards

Struck-by hazards exist when a worker can be injured by contact or impact by an object or piece of equipment. A struck-by injury is when the impact alone causes the injury. A struck-by hazard can be any flying, falling, swinging or rolling object such as tools falling from an elevated work station, inadequate rigging causing a load to be dropped and vehicular traffic.

Over the last five years, F&S employees reported 354 injuries as a result of being struck by an object or piece of equipment; or striking an object or piece of equipment.

- Metal shavings fell into an employee's eye while the employee was drilling overhead.
- An employee was struck on the arm by improperly stored material.
- An employee suffered a cut to the head by a low-hanging fixture.

Workers can protect themselves from struck-by hazards by wearing the proper PPE, including high-visibility apparel, staying clear of suspended loads and always using the best safety practices.

Electrical Hazards

Electrocution occurs when a person is exposed to a **lethal** amount of electrical energy. **Electric shock** occurs upon contact of a body part with any source of electricity that causes a flow of current through the skin, muscles, or hair.

Thankfully, only five electric shocks have been reported by F&S employees over the last five years.

- An employee came into contact with 128v DC while checking batteries.
- Another worker opened the gate to a transformer area and came in contact with the transformer, resulting in a shock.
- While removing an electrical plug, an employee's finger came into contact with a prong and caused a mild shock.
- An employee was installing a breaker when the screwdriver he was using came into contact with the buss, resulting in a multiple injuries.

In order to avoid shocks and electrocution, workers must be mindful of hazards such as contact with power lines, contact with energized sources and improper use of extension and flexible cords. Maintain a safe distance from overhead power lines, use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCI), inspect portable tools and extension cords, using power tools and equipment as designed, and follow lockout/tagout procedures.

It is essential to understand the "Focus Four Hazards" and learn how to avoid them. Recognize, avoid and protect against these hazards to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities and create a safer work environment for everyone.