

Spot The Safety Violation: What's Stopping These Workers from Falling?



What safety measures should be in place to ensure that these workers don't fall from these roofs'



Falls from heights are far too common, especially in the construction industry. And such falls often result in fatalities or serious injuries. That's why the OHS laws generally require the use of appropriate fall protection when workers are working at elevations above three metres.

The three workers in this picture from the Health and Safety Executive, Great Britain's OHS regulator, were photographed on a roof and ladder platform without any safety measures in place. For example, they're using an unguarded ladder platform that wasn't erected properly and working on top of the main roof without any means of preventing falls. And none of the workers is wearing appropriate PPE.

The picture was taken by the home owner, who was so concerned by the obvious dangers faced by the workers that he took photos and sent them to the HSE.

The roofing company was fined a total of £10,000 after pleading guilty to two breaches of the *Work at Height Regulations 2005*.

After the hearing, the HSE Inspector said, 'The company put the lives of three of their workers at risk by carrying out the roofing job in a totally unsafe manner. Anyone falling from the roof of a two-storey house would likely be killed and that type of disregard for safety is totally unacceptable. If the work had been planned correctly, more suitable equipment, such as a scaffold, and effective fall protection measures would have been in place.'

6 Elements of a Fall Protection Plan

To protect your workers from falls from heights, implement a [fall protection plan](#) that includes these six key elements:

1. The fall hazards at the workplace;
2. The fall protection systems to be used, making sure to follow the [hierarchy of fall protection equipment](#);
3. The anchors to be used;
4. The procedures to be used to assemble, maintain, inspect, use and disassemble the fall protection systems;
5. Confirmation that the clearance distances below the work area are sufficient to prevent a worker from hitting the ground or an object or level below the work area, if applicable; and
6. The rescue procedures to be used in an emergency.

Your fall protection plan should be in writing and available at the worksite to which it applies. And you should train workers on the plan. Use this [Fall Protection Plan Template](#) to develop your plans.

In addition, ensure that workers' fall protection equipment is inspected before use by a [competent person](#) for worn or damaged straps, buckles, D-rings or lines. (Use this [fall protection equipment inspection checklist](#).)