





COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Volume 46 Issue 15 April 10, 2023

## Holes and Openings

At some point in the construction process, the building you're working in will have holes in the floors, openings in walls, and unprotected sides and edges. Creating elevator shafts and stairwells, and installing plumbing, electrical conduit, and fire protection systems requires you to make holes and openings. Whether they're big or small, anytime you work around unprotected or unguarded holes and openings, you're exposed to deadly hazards.

**Falls:** If you fall through a window opening in an exterior wall, or into an unguarded hole in a roof, floor, or other walking surface, you might sprain your ankle—or you could break your neck and die.

**Struck-by hazards:** Unguarded holes or openings can let fasteners, bricks, tools, pieces of scrap, and sawdust fly through to the other side of the wall or fall to the floor below. Whoever is working on the other side of that wall, or on the level below, will have to deal with the mess that those items create, or worse, could get hit by them.

You can work safely if you guard holes and openings properly, and wear fall protection when it's necessary:

- Stay aware of your surroundings. Report any unguarded holes or openings on the jobsite.
- When holes and openings are created, protect them right away with barriers such as covers or guardrails.
- Keep the work area around holes and openings clear to minimize tripping hazards.

- Covers must be strong enough to support at least twice the weight of the workers, materials, and equipment that might be on them. Covers have to be secured so they can't be easily moved by foot traffic or equipment vibration. Don't stand on a cover if you can help it.
- Mark all floor hole covers to warn workers and equipment operators about holes. Use the words "COVER" or "HOLE", or "HOYO" in Spanish, to mark the covers.
- Never remove a cover or guardrail, even for a few minutes, unless you're actively working on the hole or opening. If you leave the work area, replace the cover or guardrail so no one can fall into or through the hole or opening.
- Wear a personal fall arrest system when you work near an unguarded or uncovered hole or opening that's 6 feet or more above a lower level.
- When you work near a hole or opening, keep a firm footing and maintain your balance. Don't lean or reach over the edge.
- Inspect all covers and guardrails regularly to ensure that they're in good condition and are really providing the necessary protection.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Before you use a nail gun on a wall, make sure you know what—or who—is on the other side of the wall.**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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S.A.F.E. CARDS® PLANNED FOR THIS WEEK:

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REVIEWED SDS # \_\_\_\_\_ SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEETING DOCUMENTATION:**

JOB NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTENDEES: \_\_\_\_\_

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*These instructions do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations.*







COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Demolition Hazards

Demolition work is a big part of the construction industry. Some demolitions are small and contained, like breaking through a wall that separates a kitchen from a dining room. Others include dismantling, destroying, and removing an entire building. Big or small, demolitions can expose you to many hazards. Unstable structures can crush you, hazardous dust can poison you, debris can strike you, and the noise of jackhammers and explosives can deafen you. Stay focused around all demolition work so you can go home in one piece at the end of the day.

**Be aware of structural instability.** Before you start any demolition work, a competent person should carry out an engineering survey. The survey determines the general condition of framing, floors, and walls. You can use this information to prevent a premature collapse. You may need to shore up a rotten floor or brace the walls of a damaged building. When you prevent a collapse, you prevent property damage and serious injuries. And if it's "just" a kitchen wall you're knocking down, you still need to know if there's plumbing, wiring, or ducts in that wall.

**Breathe easy.** Hazardous materials can hide behind walls, under floors, and in ceiling tiles. Respiratory protection is especially important on a demolition site. Breaking down buildings can expose you to hazardous dust containing: silica or asbestos, heavy metals like lead, and even biohazards such as hantavirus. A simple dust mask may not offer enough protection. You might need to wear a full respirator and protective clothing.

**Watch out for debris.** Demolition generates lots of debris. Large pieces of concrete, wood, or rebar can cut you, fall onto you, trip you, or hit you and cause an injury. Always stay alert to your surroundings. Be sure to remove and dispose of debris properly. Always wear your hard hat, eye protection, and gloves on the demolition site.

**Don't ignore the noise.** Demolition work can produce high levels of noise, which exposes you to hearing loss and other problems like tinnitus and elevated blood pressure. You'll need to protect yourself from noise created by excavators, jackhammers, and sometimes even explosives. Wear hearing protection such as earplugs or earmuffs.

**Use designated safe areas for eating, taking breaks, and using the restroom.** Don't eat or drink on the demolition site. You could ingest airborne dust containing hazardous materials. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly before eating, drinking, or smoking. Dispose of cigarette butts in safe receptacles.

**Be ready for emergencies.** Know where fire extinguishers and first-aid kits are located. Always have a clear exit route in case of a fire. Demolition sites change from moment to moment—stay aware of the changes.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Under no circumstances should you slide down a material chute for fun or to exit the building.**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:  
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