

TOOLBOX TALK #36

DROPPED OBJECT PREVENTION

Workers at height, employers and manufacturers have made a vigorous effort to stop struck-by injuries and deaths by falling objects by incorporating a dropped objects prevention program alongside of existing fall prevention programs. Product manufacturers have begun to expand dropped object preventing offerings to cover a wider range of tools and accessories, and we're even seeing tool manufacturers getting onboard by bringing tether-ready products to market. Training has also remained a key component to comprehensive fall protection programs.



Employers should seek the advice of experts on dropped objects protection. Bringing in a fresh set of eyes to a jobsite often helps identify hazards that aren't always apparent to workers whose constant exposure to them can cause "hazard fatigue", in which risks are overlooked over the course of a day. To think outside the box to find a solution, you must first step outside the box itself – something a highly trained dropped objects prevention specialist can help with on any jobsite.

From a product design standpoint, we have seen a greater demand for tool attachments that use a more permanent attachment method rather than common tethering tape. Although more permanent attachment methods such as cold-shrink tubing may carry a higher initial cost, their long-term benefits are multifold. As their name implies, they're much longer lasting, which results in less rework to repair damaged tape, and there are fewer installation errors (which means less waste) as a result of the anchor and the attachment method being integrated.

It's worth noting that the development of newer, more robust attachment methods has been, in part, a result of manufacturers working closely with customers to gain a deep understanding of the challenges and needs of workers at height. Without their valuable input, it would be impossible to overcome the myriad of dropped objects challenges faced on jobsites all over the country.