

## Weekly Safety Tip

### Falls, Falls, Falls



The latest Weekly Fatality / Catastrophe Report released by OSHA for the week of August 11, 2012 highlights a disturbing trend. Out of the 26 reported fatalities, 13 were attributed to some sort of a fall. The most recent incident happened just last week at a project located in Tennessee. The project was put on hold to conduct an investigation after two workers from a large construction company were killed in a fall that was caused by faulty scaffolding.

If you need to use a ladder, scaffold, or lift while in the office, on a construction site, or at home, you need to know and follow the safe practices for the equipment you will be using. The OSHA safety regulations vary depending on the wide variety of equipment and conditions that are encountered. Be sure to check the web links for detailed information.

**Ladders.** Always inspect the ladder before each use and be sure you are using the right ladder for the job. Never lean a step ladder, stand on the top two steps, or straddle the top. Extension ladders should reach 3 feet above the point of support and you should not stand on the top three rungs. Set up a straight or extension ladder so the base is 1 foot out for every 4 feet in height. Maintain a three point contact and face the ladder while climbing. [For more OSHA ladder safety click here.](#)

**Scaffolds.** All scaffolds should be erected and inspected each day by a competent person. Scaffolds over 10 feet high must have hand rails installed or personal fall protection equipment must be used. [Click here for OSHA scaffolding facts.](#)

**Aerial Lifts.** Vehicle mounted, boom supported aerial platforms, such as cherry pickers or bucket trucks fall into this category. The main cause for fatalities and injuries are falls, electrocutions, and collapsing or the tipping over of the equipment. This equipment should only be operated by someone who has been properly trained and proper fall protection PPE should be worn. [Click here for more information on aerial lifts by OSHA.](#)