



## Fall Protection: Holes and Openings

**What this Toolbox Talk Covers:**

- ✓ The “Dos” and “Don’ts” of working near holes and openings on a job site.

**Discussion Leader Duties:**

- ✓ Demonstrate examples of safety guidelines and general rules for construction sites.

**Discussion Notes:**

- ✓ Discuss the outcomes of the “Dos” and “Don’ts.”

- Do**
- Barricade work areas before beginning to cut a hole.
  - Guard holes that you have made.
  - For holes that must remain open, install permanent barricades around the perimeter.
  - Be careful when walking over protective paper or plastic, because a hole could be hidden underneath.
  - Notify a supervisor of any unprotected openings, and ensure they are protected before working in the area.
  - Ensure covers are made of material that can support any load that may be encountered on the worksite.

- Don’t**
- Cover holes with materials that are non-substantial, like paper, cardboard or plastic.
  - Sit on, lean against or step on a skylight or any covering placed over a hole in a roof or floor, because the material may not support your weight.
  - Leave a hole or opening uncovered without barricading and labeling the hole to prevent accidents.
  - Work around unprotected openings or skylights.
  - Use covers that protrude more than one inch above the plane of the walking surface and contain beveled edges.

**Discussion questions:**

1. What are some guidelines for covering holes?
2. Why should you avoid sitting on, leaning against or stepping on a skylight?
3. What should you do before beginning to cut a hole?
4. What should you do if you need to leave a hole or opening uncovered?

**Meeting notes:**

Employee comments/concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

Other safety issues to be addressed on the job/facility: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Training record:</b>	Date: _____	Jobsite/Facility: _____	
	Trainer: _____	Title: _____	
Employee name (print)	/ (signature)	Employee name (print)	/ (signature)
_____	/	_____	/
_____	/	_____	/
_____	/	_____	/
_____	/	_____	/
_____	/	_____	/

(Continue recording signatures on a separate sheet of paper)

Employee Quiz is provided on last page. Answers are: 1. (e), 2. (b), 3. (c), 4. (a), 5. (d)

*Toolbox Talks safety information provided by Texas Mutual Insurance Company.*



## **Fall Protection: Holes and Openings**

### **Hazards include:**

Serious injury or even death.

### **Smart Safety Rules**

- Label all covers with the word “HOLE” or “COVER” to provide warning of the hazard.
- Use extreme caution when carrying a load on a worksite, or when walking on paper, plastic or cardboard, as you might not be able to see holes beneath you.
- OSHA regulations require that covers be of standard strength and construction. They should be able to support at least two times the weight of workers equipment and materials that may cross over them.
- Even shallow holes can cause serious injuries. If you find a hole, expose it immediately for others to see, barricade it or post someone to warn others of the danger, and notify your supervisor.
- Construct a barrier to mitigate the hazard of holes when the use of covers is not possible.



## Employee Quiz

### Topic: Fall Protection: Holes and Openings

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the correct answer below.

1. How should you label covers of holes?
  - a. "HOLE"
  - b. "COVER"
  - c. "CAREFUL"
  - d. "NOT A STEP"
  - e. A or B
2. Holes less than two feet deep are not a hazard.
  - a. True
  - b. False
3. What should you do when covering a hole is not an option?
  - a. Nothing
  - b. Tell the people around you there's a hole
  - c. Construct a barrier
  - d. Use cardboard to cover the hole
4. Covers should be able to support at least \_\_\_\_\_ times the weight of workers, equipment and materials that may cross over them.
  - a. Two
  - b. Three
  - c. Four
  - d. Five
5. You should be careful when walking on \_\_\_\_\_, because holes may lurk underneath you.
  - a. Paper
  - b. Plastic
  - c. Cardboard
  - d. All of the above

**Training record:** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Jobsite/Facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_