



## FLOOR, ROOF, GROUND OPENINGS



Falls from roofs and roof openings are the leading cause of construction fatalities and injuries. Falls through floor openings are in the top five listing of causes. Falls into open excavations also contribute heavily. All of these are preventable with adequate protection, both the worker and the opening. Falls result from failure to provide adequate guarding and fall protection for workers whose job requires them to work around roof, floor, or ground openings.

### **Why Do These Types of Accidents Happen?**

- Workers remove the piece of plywood covering the opening to use somewhere else.
- Workers step onto tarps, cardboard or paper not knowing there is an opening underneath.
- Equipment is driven over material not realizing there is an opening underneath.
- Inattention or distraction when walking on the job site.

### **Basic Guidelines**

- Use guardrails for all floor openings or excavations.
- If guardrails are not possible, provide sturdy covers of heavy plywood, planking or steel that will support any anticipated load.
- If a cover is used, be sure it is secured to prevent movement or becoming dislodged.
- Paint the cover a bright color with signage **"DANGER – Opening – DO NOT REMOVE!"**
- Educate all workers on the location of dangerous openings and train them to NEVER step on material that could be covering an opening, either in the building or on the job site.