

# Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

## SUMMARY

This procedure covers the processes to identify, eliminate, or control dropped object hazards.

Level of Use: Informational Use

## TARGET AUDIENCE

This procedure is applicable to all modes of operation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBSECTION	TITLE	PAGE
1	SCOPE .....	1
2	DISCUSSION.....	1
3	DEFINITIONS .....	1
4	RESPONSIBILITIES .....	2
5	INSTRUCTIONS .....	2

## PROCEDURE STEPS

### 1 SCOPE

- 1.1 This procedure covers the processes to identify, eliminate, or control dropped object hazards.
- 1.2 This procedure is applicable to all modes of operation.

### 2 DISCUSSION

- 2.1 Dropped objects have the potential to cause equipment damage, personnel injury, or death. The purpose of this procedure is to assist our workforce in identifying and mitigating dropped object hazards.

### 3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Active Barrier: An individual who acts as a hazard warning system in lieu of or in addition to a passive barrier to keep personnel out of the drop zone, stop work when personnel must enter the drop zone, and let work resume when personnel have exited the drop zone.
  - 1. Where active barriers (people) are used to enhance passive barriers, ensure steps are taken to adequately protect the active barrier (people) from the risk of dropped objects.

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

- 3.2 Dropped Object Event: Material, tools, or equipment is inadequately controlled and drops to a lower level.
- 3.3 Near Miss: An unplanned incident or event which did not, but had the potential to, result in injury to personnel or damage to equipment.
- 3.4 Passive Barrier: A barrier consisting of barricades, danger tape, signage, etc. effectively designed to keep personnel out of the established drop zone.
- 3.5 Twist Method: A hand-off method where the recipient of an item grasps and twists the item slightly to let the sender know the recipient has control of the item before the sender releases his or her grip.

### 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 4.1 Leadership is responsible for:

- 1. Setting standards and expectations for personnel to follow guidance documents and ask questions when unsure.

#### 4.2 Supervisors are responsible for:

- 1. Being accountable for the control of dropped objects hazards within their work scope.
- 2. Insuring pre-job brief is performed
- 3. Establishment of drop zone or by person in charge (PIC).
- 4. Providing oversight, intervention, and coaching necessary to ensure no dropped item events occur
- 5. Informing personnel of the content and intent of this procedure.

#### 4.3 Personnel are responsible for:

- 1. Preventing dropped objects.
- 2. Identifying dropped object hazards and mitigation measures.
- 3. Maintaining control of tools, equipment, and materials.
- 4. Staying out of the drop zone or using 3-way communications with personnel working within the drop zone to stop work so they can enter, and using 3-way communications when personnel have exited and reestablished barriers.
- 5. Speaking up and stopping work when unsure or unsafe.

### 5 INSTRUCTIONS

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

### 5.1 Aerial Lift

1. Work in bucket at elevated heights
2. Pole climbing

### 5.2 Tower work

1. Climbing with harness
2. Lifted access via helicopter
3. Aerial lift access

### 5.3 Ladders

1. While ascending or descending ladders, personnel:
  - a. Shall not hand carry any item.
  - b. Shall not wear a tool belt containing loose tools.
  - c. Shall holster or otherwise secure portable tools.
  - d. Determine if barriers must be in place.

### 5.4 Scaffolds

**NOTE:** Active barriers used with passive barriers increase effectiveness and efficiency.

1. During scaffold erection or dismantling, barriers shall be established to control areas below the activity to prevent personnel exposure to dropped items.

### 5.5 Tree Work, Maintenance or Removal

1. Establishment of drop zone
2. Tethering tools and equipment

### 5.6 Below-Grade Operations

1. Excavations
2. Vaults

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

### 3. Manholes

#### 5.7 Job Briefings

Pre-job brief should include a discussion of dropped object risks including an evaluation of the work environment, work method, tools, equipment, establishment of drop zone, using 3-way communications to stop and resume work activities when entering and exiting the drop zone, and material to be used. The discussion must include precautionary measures to protect any personnel required to be in the drop zone to support the overhead work.

#### Dropped Object Prevention (Control Measures)

1. Good housekeeping shall be maintained on all work areas, aerial lifts, platforms, scaffold decks, and work area perimeter protection.
2. Following are measures that when implemented should reduce the risk of dropped object events. This list is not all inclusive:
  - Aerial work utilizing a bucket truck
  - Tethering tools
    - When tool lanyards are used thoroughly review surrounding work environments to ensure that additional hazards are not created by lanyard use, i.e., working near rotating or moving equipment
  - Establishment of drop zone
  - Identifying and protecting sensitive equipment
  - Temporary re-routing of walkways
  - Traffic Control
  - Installing overhead protection.
  - Where tools, equipment or other objects are expected to be placed next to handrails or guardrails, containment barrier (solid or mesh) should be installed
  - Where materials need to be raised or lowered to and from an elevated platform, rope with a canvas bag or equivalent shall be used.

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

- Material, tools, and equipment are adequately controlled at the end of each shift, or anytime the work area is left unattended, and at the completion of the job.
- Grating, penetrations, and floor openings under which personnel may pass must be adequately covered to prevent items from falling through.

### 5.8 Material Movement Control

1. When passing material by hand, use the "twist method," 3-way communication, or some other form of agreed communication indicating the receiver has control of the material prior to the sender releasing his or her grip.
2. Prior to hoisting and rigging operations, confirm load is secure and there are no loose items on loads.
3. Establish a drop zone in areas where the lifting will pass over.
4. The active barrier (people) can have no other duties that could distract them from focusing on keeping people out of the drop zone or stopping overhead work until all personnel are out of the drop zone. If the person(s) must divert their attention for whatever reason, work must stop until they can resume active barrier duty or are replaced by another person acting as the active barrier.

### 5.9 Work Place Inspections

1. Work groups should inspect their areas at the start of a work activity and routinely thereafter for the following:
  - Dropped object hazards are identified and effective control measures are established/implemented.
  - All workers are adequately protected from overhead work or a drop zone area is established (check all potential paths of falling objects to areas below the job site).
  - General housekeeping standards are being met.

**END of Instructions**

## GOVERNING DOCUMENT

SAFE-1001S Injury & Illness Prevention Plan

## COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT / REGULATORY COMMITMENT

§3203. Injury and Illness Prevention Program

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

Article 24. Elevating Work Platforms and Aerial Devices  
Article 20. Hand and Portable Powered Tools and Equipment  
Article 12. Tree Work, Maintenance or Removal  
Article 28. Miscellaneous Construction Tools and Equipment  
Article 24. Fall Protection  
Article 21. Scaffolds--General Requirements  
Article 4. Access, Work Space, and Work Areas  
Group 13. Cranes and Other Hoisting Equipment  
Article 15. Cranes and Derricks in Construction  
Article 12. Tree Work, Maintenance or Removal  
Article 6. Excavations  
Article 10. Personal Safety Devices and Safeguards  
§1513. Housekeeping.

### REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

#### Developmental References:

N/A

#### Supplemental References:

N/A

### APPENDICES

N/A

### ATTACHMENTS

N/A

### DOCUMENT REVISION

N/A

## Dropped Object Prevention Procedure

### DOCUMENT APPROVER

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### REVISION NOTES

Where?	What Changed?
N/A	New Procedure