

'Height Aware' campaign

A promotional campaign including workplace inspections



Falls from height are a major cause of injuries at work. In many cases, work at height is a 'one off' or incidental to the main job to be done. This means people often don't recognise the risks and so don't take the precautions they need to, to work safely.

What is 'work at height'?

Any work that involves people being in a position from which they could fall and injure themselves.

What is the problem?

Falling from height is the most common cause of workplace deaths.

In 2004/05, 53 people died and nearly 3800 were seriously injured as a result of falling from height while at work.

60% of these injuries resulted from people falling from below head height.

Falls from ladders and stepladders account for about a quarter of all injuries and it is estimated they cost the UK economy £60 million each year.



What do you need to do ?

Plan properly

- Think about the work you do and identify all the activities which involve work at height, don't forget one-off jobs and tasks which only take a few minutes.
- Don't underestimate the risks, assess them - simply 'taking care' is not enough.

Avoid 'work at height' where possible

- Use different equipment or method of work – check what new equipment is available to buy or hire.
- Think about how fixtures and fittings, plant and services could be designed or installed to avoid the need to work at height.

Select the right equipment and people

- Where possible, use equipment which prevents a fall, eg podium steps, cherry pickers or tower scaffolds, which have a working platform and guard rails – don't make do to save money or time.
- Check contractors are competent and have the experience to carry out the type of work you need to have done.



Train those doing the work

- Make sure they know how to use the equipment properly, including erecting and dismantling it safely.
- Check contractors have suitable training, ask to see certificates.

Inspect and maintain

- Make sure all equipment is regularly inspected - damaged equipment must either be repaired or taken out of use.

Supervise and monitor

- Check work is being carried out as planned and the right equipment is being used.

Want to know more?

There are five 'Height Aware' campaign information sheets:

Sheet 1: Work at height: The basics

Sheet 2: Selecting equipment for work at height

Sheet 3: Selecting competent contractors for work at height

Sheet 4: Selecting, using and maintaining personal fall protection equipment

Sheet 5: Minor roof maintenance work: Protecting against falls

A 'Height Aware' CD-Rom is also available which includes these information sheets, other current HSE guidance, a toolbox talk on ladder and stepladder safety and a short video, *Safer access for maintenance work*.

More information is available on the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk/falls and from HSE Infoline on 0845 345 0055.