

Government of Maharashtra
Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health

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Subject: Preventive measures are suggested for working at Height.

Introduction:

In the current situation of Covid-19 lockdown, the inspection of all the factories may not be possible by this directorate. Hence all such type of factories are hereby directed to follow the following safety measures in addition to the provisions of The Factories Act, 1948 and The Maharashtra Factories Rules, 1963.

The given guide lines are not exhaustive in nature; any additional precaution as may be necessary based on specific requirement should be adopted by the factory management for safe manufacturing operation of the factory based on the nature of manufacturing activity.

Following preventive measures are suggested for working at Height.

1. Working at height refers to any work where a person could potentially fall and injure themselves. It could be from a ladder, a roof's edge, because of breaking of fragile roof, through an opening on the floor, even a loading dock can be working at height. In general fall protection is required for any height change of 4 feet or more.
2. Work at height shall be carried out by experienced person only. It shall be supervised by responsible supervisor.
3. Suitable safety harness, full body harness shall be provided to the worker working at height or on fragile roof that prevent the wearer from falling from a height. The harness allows the user to attach themselves to a stationary object. By wearing the belt or harness the risk of injury from a fall is greatly reduced.
4. Harness shall be connected to lifeline provided over the roofing or fixed structure to prevent the fall of worker.
5. Lanyards need to be properly selected depending on the height of work.

6. Fixed crawl boards and roof ladders shall be provided for working on fragile roofing.
7. Where there is a risk of a fall from or through the structure of a roof and there are no other means to prevent a fall, temporary edge protection (Railing) and/or scaffolding should be installed.
8. Perimeter or edge protection should be installed on all the exposed edges of a roof which include the perimeters of buildings, the perimeters of skylights or other fragile roof materials, and any openings in the floor or roof.
9. Isolate the area below roof work wherever there is any danger of people being struck by falling material, debris, tools, and/or material from adjacent cranes or structures
10. Wherever possible safety nets shall be provided below the area of work at height such as fragile roof. Safety nets acts as a collective fall arrest systems, that is, they provide passive protection from falls while allowing people to work at height without restricting their movement.
11. Work Permit System shall be incorporated and strictly followed.
12. Risk assessment shall be done before commencement for work at height, and necessary safety precautions shall be adopted.
13. A life line support rope arrangement shall be provided over roof sheet for anchoring of safety belts while carrying out any work on the roof/work at height.
14. In majority of factories, small sheets of transparent plastic/PP sheets are provided in between the GI sheets to improve natural lighting in the plant. Over the period of time, this transparent sheet becomes fragile and becomes difficult to identify (distinguish) when a person goes on the roof to carry out any work. A person falling from this sheet after stepping onto it has now become a common cause of fatal accidents. To prevent such type of fall , a metal net of adequate strength shall be provided just below these transparent sheets(affixed to the adjacent GI sheets)

THE DO'S & DON'TS OF WORKING AT HEIGHTS

- i. DO as much work as you can while you are on the ground.
- ii. DO make sure that the employees can safely move to and from the area where they are working at height.

- iii. DO ensure that the equipment that you're using for the job is strong, stable and suitable enough to get the job done. Inspect and maintain them regularly.
- iv. DO be careful when you are working near to a fragile surface.
- v. DO ensure that you are protected from falling objects.
- vi. DO make preparations for emergency evacuations and rescues.
- vii. DON'T overload the ladders that they are working on, with equipment or materials.
- viii. DON'T try to reach too far when you're on a ladder or stepladder.
- ix. DON'T use ladders or stepladders to do work that entail heavy or strenuous tasks. Only use them to do work that's quick and light.
- x. DON'T allow incompetent workers do any work at height.
- xi. DON'T lean or place the ladder on or fragile upper surfaces.
- xii. DON'T stay quiet when you feel someone is compromising their own safety or the safety of others

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