



DIRECTIVE NUMBER: 2023-003

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 1, 2023

SUBJECT: Local Emphasis Program – Falls in General Industry

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This instruction, *Local Emphasis Program on Falls in General Industry*, describes policies and procedures for implementing a UOSH Local Emphasis Program (LEP) to identify and to reduce hazards which are causing or likely to cause serious injuries and fatalities from falls while working at heights in general industry.

Scope: This instruction applies UOSH-wide.

References: See Section III for a list of references.

Cancellations: None.

Action Offices: State of Utah, Labor Commission, UOSH.

Originating Office: State of Utah, Labor Commission, UOSH.

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Executive Summary

This instruction provides guidance to UOSH for implementation of UOSH's LEP to reduce or eliminate workplace fall hazards associated with working at heights in general industry. Considering that falls remain the leading cause of fatalities and serious injuries in all industries, the agency has determined that an increase in enforcement and outreach activities addressing falls in general industry is warranted.

Significant Changes

None. This is a new instruction.

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I. Purpose.

This instruction describes policies and procedures for implementing an LEP to reduce or eliminate injuries and fatalities associated with falls while working at heights in general industry.

II. Scope.

- A. This instruction applies UOSH-wide.
- B. This instruction *does not* apply to construction; all construction inspections related to falls will be conducted pursuant to [UOSH's Construction LEP](#).
- C. This LEP will target the following general industry activities:
 - 1. Roof top mechanical work/maintenance
 - 2. Utility line work/maintenance (electrical, cable)
 - 3. Arborist/tree trimming
 - 4. Holiday light installation
 - 5. Road sign maintenance/billboards
 - 6. Power washing buildings (not connected to painting)
 - 7. Gutter cleaning
 - 8. Chimney cleaning
 - 9. Window cleaning
 - 10. Communication Towers
- D. For other general industry work activities where a worker is observed working at height, an inspection may be initiated by the Compliance Safety and Health Officer (CSHO).
- E. If an inspection is not warranted after entering the site and observing work activities, the CSHO will conduct an outreach activity on fall protection and exit the site.

III. References.

- A. 29 CFR Part 1910, *Occupational Safety and Health Standards*, <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910>.
- B. 29 CFR Part 1910, *Subpart D - Walking-Working Surfaces*, <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910SubpartD>.
- C. 29 CFR Part 1910, *Subpart I - Personal Protective Equipment*, § 1910.140, *Personal fall protection systems*, <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.140>.
- D. Utah Occupational Safety and Health (UOSH) Field Operations Manual (UFOM), May 2020.
- E. OSHA Instruction, [CPL 02-00-025](#), *Scheduling System for Programmed*

Inspections, January 4, 1995.

- F. OSHA Instruction, [CPL 02-00-051](#), *Enforcement Exemptions and Limitations under the Appropriations Act*, May 28, 1998 (including annually updated Appendix A).
- G. UOSH Instruction, 2023-002, *Site-Specific Targeting (SST)*, August 7, 2023.
- H. Enforcement of Fall Protection on Moving Stock, <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/1996-10-18>.
- I. Procedures for Local and Regional Emphasis Programs, <https://www.osha.gov/memos/2014-12-03/procedures-local-and-regional-emphasis-programs>.
- J. Enforcement Inspection Guidance for Tree Care and Tree Removal Operations, <https://www.osha.gov/memos/2021-06-30/inspection-guidance-for-tree-care-and-tree-removal-operations>.

IV. Cancellations.

None.

V. Action Offices.

- A. Responsible Office.
State of Utah, Labor Commission, UOSH.
- B. Action Office.
State of Utah, Labor Commission, UOSH.

VI. Background.

A. Fall Fatalities.

Despite the balanced application of outreach, enforcement, and compliance assistance efforts, fatalities caused by falls continue to be a leading cause of death for all workers. A comparison of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and OSHA Information System (OIS) national data between 2014 and 2021 revealed the following:

All Industries	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Fatalities	4,821	4,836	5,190	5,147	5,250	5,333	4,764	5,190
Fatal Falls – Slips/Trips/Falls	818	800	849	887	791	880	805	850
Fatal Falls to Lower Level	660	648	697	713	615	711	645	680

Note: Falls to lower level accounted for 13% (5,369) of the 40,531 fatalities in all industries during this period. (Source BLS)

Non-Construction	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Fatalities	3,922	3,899	4,199	4,176	4,242	4,272	3756	4204
Fatal Falls – Slips/Trips/Falls	459	436	465	501	453	*	437	460
Fatal Falls to Lower Level	315	298	327	347	295	*	294	302

Note: Falls to lower level accounted for 7% (2,178) of the 32,670 non-construction fatalities during this period. (Source BLS)

* BLS Data not available for 2019.

B. Inspection Data.

Inspections All Industries *	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Inspections	36,163	35,820	31,948	32,408	32,023	33,393	21,710	24,333
Fall Emphasis	15,311	14,885	13,233	11,682	11,181	11,513	7,319	7,954

Note: Nearly 31% (77,782) of the 247,798 inspections OSHA conducted during this period had a fall emphasis. (Source OIS Inspection Summary Reports and Scan Summary Reports)

Non-Construction Inspections*	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Inspections	17,929	18,279	16,318	15,490	15,226	15,972	10,676	11,744
Fall Emphasis	2,456	2,412	2,019	1,097	883	1,028	713	749

Note: Roughly 9% (11,357) of the 121,634 inspections OSHA conducted during this period had a fall emphasis.

(Source OIS Inspection Summary Reports and Scan Summary Reports)

* Source - Annual Enforcement Report

C. Consultation Data.

Consultation Visits – All Industries	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Visits	19,694	22,480	27,836	26,315	26,602	26,213	17,663	17,607
Fall Emphasis *	17	470	4,460	4,903	4,230	4,731	2,231	2,154

Note: Roughly 13% (23,196) of the 184,410 consultation visits in all industries during this period were fall related.

* Information was not comprehensively captured until 2016. (Source OIS)

Non-Construction Consultation Visits	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Visits	14,927	16,568	19,436	18,107	18,143	18,392	12,020	12,372
Fall Emphasis *	10	166	1,793	1,728	2,056	2,168	550	771

Note: Roughly 7% (9,242) of the 129,965 consultation visits in the non-construction industries during this period were fall related.

* Information was not comprehensively captured until 2016. (Source OIS)

VII. LEP Goal.

The goal of this LEP is to significantly reduce or eliminate unprotected worker exposures to fall-related hazards in general industry that can result in serious injuries and deaths. UOSH’s goal will be accomplished by a combination of hazard-based inspection targeting and optional locally-generated programmed targeting in general industry, outreach to employers, and compliance assistance.

VIII. Procedures.

- A. Programmed inspections under a new LEP are typically initiated after a 90-day outreach period. See Section X for outreach activities.
- B. CSHOs must never put themselves in harm’s way while conducting an inspection. Supervisors shall ensure CSHOs comply with all safety and health guidance and

requirements developed by UOSH. CSHOs should review and follow all UOSH policies and procedures to be prepared for foreseeable hazards which may arise during the inspection.

- C. CSHOs are authorized to initiate inspections under the scope of this LEP whenever they observe someone working at heights. These observations may occur during the CSHO's normal work-day travel or while enroute to, from, or during, other UOSH inspections. If a potential imminent danger condition exists, an inspection shall be initiated in accordance with Chapter 11, *Imminent Danger, Accident & Emergency Response*, of the UFOM, and documented in UOSH's casefile narrative. Inspections related to falls will also be initiated as the result of incidents, referrals, and complaints.
- D. When CSHOs observe fall hazards but are unable to begin an immediate inspection (e.g., responding to an incident, etc.), they shall notify the Field Operations Manager or designee of their observations. In such cases, CSHOs will provide such with the following information:
 - 1. The name, address, and/or location of the worksite;
 - 2. The state and condition of the worksite operation, including any apparent serious hazards; and,
 - 3. The name of the establishment performing the operation (if known) and the number of workers observed.
- E. Fall hazard referrals brought to the attention of the UOSH Office shall be evaluated, and, if appropriate, inspected.
- F. Whenever an inspection is initiated under this LEP based on a CSHO self-referral, the CSHO shall include in the casefile narrative a description of the circumstances which prompted the inspection.
- G. During all programmed safety and health inspections and during all un-programmed inspections (incidents, complaints, and referrals), CSHOs shall observe the surrounding area for potential fall exposures and conduct an inspection under this LEP if any are present.
- H. The scope of inspections initiated under this LEP shall be conducted in accordance with the UFOM and shall normally be limited to evaluating worker exposure to hazards associated with falls. However, a CSHO may expand the scope of an inspection under this LEP if there is evidence from injury and illness records, plain view hazards, or employee interviews of other potential safety and health hazards or violations at the worksite. CSHOs shall follow the guidelines in the UFOM when expanding the scope of any inspection (Chapter 3, Section II.B.).
- I. At the end of each LEP inspection, the CSHO will provide the employer with information concerning UOSH fall protection requirements and protective measures that should be implemented. For example, the CSHO may give the employer the website address for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) fall prevention standards and related outreach materials or provide copies of OSHA publications (resource dependent).

IX. Recording in OIS.

- A. All compliance assistance interventions conducted under this LEP must be coded with “FALL” under the NEP code field.
- B. All enforcement activities falling under the scope of this LEP (See Section II) must be coded with “FALL” under the NEP code field.
- C. Compliance assistance activities related to fall prevention will be coded with the LEP Code “FALL” as well as the applicable Topic(s) (e.g., Fall Stand- Down).
- D. All consultation activities (Request, Visit, and Compliance Assistance) conducted in response to this LEP will also be coded “FALL” into OIS.
- E. Enforcement and consultation activities related to fall hazards discovered under other LEPs must be coded for all the LEPs. For example, enforcement/consultation activities conducted under the Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS) LEP must be coded “RCS-NEP” as well as “FALL.”

X. Outreach.

- A. UOSH will conduct statewide outreach upon commencement of this LEP, and periodically, using public announcements and communications to media, stakeholders, and alliances.
- B. UOSH will develop and implement a comprehensive fall prevention awareness outreach program for 90 days prior to initiating inspections under this LEP. UOSH will continue outreach efforts at least quarterly after the initial 90-day outreach period has concluded. Suggested outreach activities are as follows:
 - 1. Write letters or news releases for local news organizations announcing the implementation of this LEP. Trade magazines can also assist with disseminating information about this LEP.
 - 2. Conduct outreach activities such as seminars/informational sessions for employer/worker groups, trade associations, and the UOSH Advisory Council.
 - 3. Provide outreach material to industry associations and equipment rental organizations for distribution to membership and clients.
 - 4. Collaborate with cooperative program participants, including Voluntary Protection Programs, to share success stories and technical information concerning effective means of controlling, reducing, or eliminating fall injuries and fatalities.
 - 5. Collaborate with the UOSH Consultation Program on strategic approaches for assisting employers with fall prevention safety at worksites.
- C. Compliance assistance resources include:
 - 1. [Shipyards Employment: Walking-Working Surfaces and PFPS Standard FAQs.](#)
 - 2. [Aerial Lift Fall Protection over Water in Shipyards](#)
 - 3. [Additional OSHA fall related compliance assistance material.](#)

- D. UOSH may establish Partnerships and Alliances with employer groups, particularly small employers, and with worker representatives in the industry to share information concerning effective means of controlling and reducing employee exposures, and on workers' rights, including the right to a safe and healthful workplace.
- E. Small businesses should be encouraged to contact UOSH's Consultation Program for assistance. UOSH's Consultation Program offers no-cost and confidential safety and health services to small- and medium-sized businesses, with priority given to high-hazard worksites. Consultants work with employers to identify workplace hazards, provide advice for compliance with UOSH rules and OSHA standards incorporated by UOSH, and assist in establishing and improving safety and health programs. Consultation services are separate from enforcement and do not result in penalties or citations. To contact [UOSH Consultation](#), call 1-801-530-6855 or email consultation-program@utah.gov.