

OHBA Safety Pages: UFOs: Unsafe falling/flying objects

Bet you didn't know that UFOs can be workplace hazards. They can when they're "unsafe falling/flying objects"—and they cause injuries at a surprising number of worksites across pretty much all industries, from factories to offices.

In construction, for example, you're at risk from falling objects when you're beneath equipment, scaffolds, structures, etc., or where overhead work is being performed.

Preventing "UFO" encounters

Preventing injuries from unsafe falling or flying objects isn't rocket science. Try these tips:

Tools

- Secure tools when working under equipment or over people.
- Use toeboards and screens when working over people.
- Inspect tools. Don't use tools with loose, cracked, or splintered handles.
- Inspect guards on grinder and make sure to wear eye and face protection: a face shield, plus safety glasses under the shield.

Equipment

- Wear hard hats when working under equipment.
- Use safety glasses, goggles, or shields where tools or machines may cause flying particles or debris.
- Machines should be set up so the object being machined is properly secured and will not fly out when the machine is turning. Check all guards to see if they are in place and working properly.
- With older equipment, some guards may be missing or lost. Check to ensure all rotating and

moving parts are protected and contact cannot be made. This may require working with leadership to install or retrofit new devices on older machines.

- Cleaning with compressed air can be dangerous. If used for cleaning, it should be reduced to less than 30 psi, and should only be used when effective chip guarding is in place and PPE is worn. Never clean clothing with CDA.

Storage

Objects should be stored safely to prevent them from falling. If shelves or storage racks are used, check them for defects so they will not collapse and cause their contents to fall. Store heavy and bulky objects close to the floor.

Lighter and smaller objects should be stored higher. Position objects securely on shelves or racks. Watch for vibrating equipment in the area that may cause objects to fall from storage containers. Securing racks and shelves to the floor, ceiling, or wall is a best practice to prevent tip overs.

Employees

Prevent injuries from falling or flying objects by looking out for:

- New employees not familiar with tools, equipment, or processes
- Employees new to the workforce with little experience and knowledge of work practices
- Employees unfamiliar with equipment requirements, use, limitations, and protections
- Employees who work with special behavior plans requiring limited access to portable objects
- Stressors, such as: - Untidiness - Noise - Fatigue, shiftwork, etc.

Courtesy: SAIF



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SAFETY PAGE MEETING GUIDE

Topic: UFOs

Employer: _____ Project: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Shift: _____

Number in crew: _____ Number attending: _____

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:	Company:
1.		
2.		
3.		
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6.		
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10.		
11.		
12.		

Supervisor's remarks: _____

Supervisor: _____ (Print) _____ (Signature)