

Common Causes of Construction Site Accidents

Construction is the backbone of the economy. To quote an old adage, “As the construction industry goes, so goes the country.” Construction provides thousands of jobs in Oregon, but each year, workers and their families discover the hard way that construction sites are among the most dangerous of all work places, and [Portland construction site accident attorneys](#) must be called in to help.

Construction companies, large and small, can only do so much to prevent accidents on site. Portland construction site accident attorneys frequently discover, unfortunately, that many companies sidestep their responsibilities to safeguard and protect their employees. In addition, there are so many [causes of construction site accidents](#), it may seem impossible to guard against all of them.

People working in the industry, as well as Portland construction site accident attorneys have found that there are nine factors leading to the majority of construction site accidents.

1. Injuries due to slips and falls are the most common on a construction site. In many cases, these are caused by unsafe working areas, including holes and trenches that have been left uncovered, and exposed stakes and re-bars, which can be potentially fatal to people working or walking above them.
2. Falling on stairwells with no guardrails is another common cause of injury on construction sites. Worse, workers who step backwards without looking frequently fall through open sided floors, landing on their heads or shoulders, sustaining serious if not fatal injuries.
3. Stepladders are the root cause of a large number of accidents on construction sites. Workers frequently fall when a stepladder tips over, or when it collapses. The latter often occurs when stepladders intended for household applications are used on construction sites, where they cannot consistently carry the weight of a worker and his tools. In addition, tools left on the top platform of a stepladder frequently fall and hit a worker on the head when the ladder is moved.
4. The number one cause of deaths on construction sites is falls from roofs when no fall protection is provided. These falls typically take place when lifelines designed to arrest a fall are not properly attached, or when more than one lifeline is attached to a single anchoring point.
5. Portland construction site accident attorneys know there are state regulations requiring the erection of scaffolding on building sites. A competent person capable of recognizing hazards, and who has the authority to take corrective action, must be appointed to supervise scaffolding. Nevertheless, injuries occur every year due to falls from scaffolding, materials and tools falling from scaffolding and injuring workers, and even scaffolding collapses.
6. In our neighboring state of Washington, an average of two construction workers are killed each year by collapsed excavation walls and trenches. Soil typically weighs 2,000-3,000 pounds per yard, and when it collapses on a worker, it crushes him or her, cutting off their air supply. Death can occur within minutes.

7. Power tool accidents occur when workers fail to use appropriate eye and ear protection. Improper guards on power saws can lead to severe cuts and in some cases, amputations. Also, nail gun injuries to eyes are increasingly common, not surprising when you consider a nail comes out of these guns with the same force a bullet comes out of a .22 caliber pistol.
8. The number one cause of injuries that leads to claims through Portland construction site accident attorneys is injury caused through lifting. When workers lift bags of cement, sheets of drywall or siding, or other heavy objects commonly found on building sites, and they use their back muscles more than their leg muscles, they're quite likely to suffer soft tissue sprains, back strains, and chronic injuries that lead to medical costs and disability claims.
9. Dump trucks and forklifts are frequently found on construction sites. It's not uncommon for pedestrians to be struck when dump trucks back up, due to the very large blind spots dump truck drivers have to contend with. If a forklift driver is trying to turn with the load raised, accidents often occur. The load can fall off and strike someone, or the forklift can tip over. In both cases, fatal accidents have occurred with frightening regularity.

Construction jobs provide a good living to thousands of Oregon families, but clearly, construction sites are dangerous places in which to earn a living. Workers clearly carry the burden of responsibility for looking after their own safety. But when a construction site accident occurs, it can cause an injury that may require months, or even years of treatment, at enormous expense.

Workman's compensation is unlikely to cover the expenses that come as a result of a serious injury. If you or someone you know has been unfortunate enough to be injured while on site due to negligence, [contact a construction accident attorney](#). They will help you deal with the insurance companies and advise you on the best course of action to get you the compensation you and your family will need.