



## Fall Protection for Residential Construction

On March 15, 2013, OSHA ended the temporary enforcement measures for fall protection in residential construction. These temporary measures were implemented to help employers transition to OSHA's new Residential Fall Protection requirements contained in the December 2010 policy change (directive). Back on December 16, 2010, OSHA published a new compliance instruction for residential construction work, which was to go in effect on June 16, 2011. But full implementation was delayed and the temporary enforcement measures were put in place. The temporary enforcement measures have now ended.

As of March 15, 2013, employers are required to follow the original fall protection guidelines from 1995, known as subpart M (Reference OSHA 1926.500 - .503).

### Major points of re-implemented OSHA fall protection requirements:

- Fall protection is needed anytime a fall of 6 feet or more is possible. Roof work is included.
- No longer does a 25 feet eave-to-ground height threshold apply.
- Slide guards are no longer acceptable forms of fall protection, regardless of the roof pitch or height of roof eave.
- Written site specific fall protection plans can be used as a form of fall protection if conventional fall protection is shown to be infeasible or if it presents a greater hazard.
- Interim OSHA instruction STD 03-00-001, which provided some flexibility for fall protection, is cancelled.
- Temporary enforcement measures are also cancelled.
- Effective date for re-implemented fall protection requirements for residential fall protection is March 15, 2013.

### Who is affected?

The standard applies to employees engaged in residential construction work. This is defined as a home or dwelling being built with traditional wood frame construction materials and methods. The limited use of structural steel in a predominantly wood framed home would still qualify as residential construction. Use of sheet metal studs or the use of masonry brick in exterior walls would also fall under residential construction.

### Summary

Residential construction employees conducting work 6 feet or more above a lower level shall be protected from falling. Depending on the particular activity, acceptable forms of fall protection include guardrails, safety nets, active fall arrest systems (fall restraint is also acceptable), controlled access zones, covers, positioning systems and warning line systems. The requirements are effective March 15, 2013. Any employer who is not providing acceptable forms of fall protection for the affected workers will be cited, unless they can demonstrate why conventional fall protection was not feasible or why it presented a greater hazard if it was used.

For more details, visit:

[http://eblast.capitalsafety.com/2013\\_03\\_19\\_residential\\_roofing/lit/OSHA%20Residential%20Fall%20Protection%202013.pdf](http://eblast.capitalsafety.com/2013_03_19_residential_roofing/lit/OSHA%20Residential%20Fall%20Protection%202013.pdf)

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