

TOOLBOX TALK for August 31st, 2026

Carpenter's Training -

Portland - 9/19 MEWP/Aerial Lift. 9/19 Fall Protection. 9/19 Rough Terrain Forklift. 9/26 Forklift. 9/26 First Aid

Ontario - 9/12 First Aid. 9/19 Chemical Safety and Safety Communications

Taper's -

Portland - 9/28 Fall Protection. 9/28 First Aid. 9/30 Forklift. 9/30 Aerial Lift.

Twisted Ankles and Hazard Awareness

In the last few weeks, we've had two incidents where workers have twisted their ankles. Though it may seem there is nothing we can do about such "accidents", we can reduce or eliminate the causes of these events by being fully aware of our surroundings and taking preemptive action to reduce the chance of harm.

In the first case, our worker was coming down some stairs and stepping off into a place that had mattes and rebar in a frame, as it was being prepared for a concrete pour. Stepping down into the rebar and matte caught the foot of the worker causing his ankle to twist. So, what alternatives were there? First, it might have been safer to use the other stairs where the hazard did not exist. Second, if the hazard was recognized, it may have been possible for the GC to make the area safe by either blocking egress or by putting a temporary solid surface in place to keep everyone from harm. But did we see the hazard and not report it? When we don't speak up in advance or take precautions it shouldn't be too surprising when a dangerous condition persists.

In the second case, our worker was carrying a sheet of drywall when he tried to step over a curb frame that was in place for an upcoming concrete pour. The worker was an apprentice and may not have been comfortable carrying sheets, but the curb in the egress path looks like it was the root of the problem. The curb had been in place for days and the GC had not done anything to make the egress path safe. Though the worker and everyone who entered via this path had seen, and stepped over the problem, it had not been recognized as a hazard to be mitigated.

Ground level slips and trips are common hazards on construction sites, often caused by uneven surfaces, wet conditions, cluttered walkways or other hazards. The GC has the responsibility to maintain safe passage around the jobsite, but if we see a problem and don't bring it to their attention, we're complicit. We must keep our eyes open to hazards and never walk away from a hazard without taking the time to report it or correct it. When we see something, it's time to do something.

Toolbox Talk Submission