Fatalities caused by falls from elevation continue to be a leading cause of death for construction workers, accounting for 279 of the 806 construction fatalities recorded in 2012 and 229 of 769 in 2013. These deaths were preventable.

May 4-15, 2015 is the OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s) National Safety Stand-down event to prevent falls in construction.

The purpose of the National Fall Prevention Stand-Down is to raise awareness of preventing fall hazards in construction. Fall prevention safety standards were among the top 10 most frequently cited OSHA standards, during fiscal year 2014.

The UT Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS) encourages the UT community to participate in this campaign to help raise awareness of fall prevention from elevated surfaces. Any employee involved such work needs to be aware of the dangers and how they can protect themselves from falls both on the job and at home. EHS encourages all supervisors to stop work and take a few minutes to train employees on the dangers of working on elevated surfaces.

Three Simple Steps To Save Lives:

OSHA has partnered with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) - Construction Sector on this nationwide outreach campaign to raise awareness among workers and employers about common fall hazards in construction, and how falls from ladders, scaffolds and roofs can be prevented and lives can be saved. Here’s how:

1 - **PLAN** Ahead to Get the Job Done Safely

When working from heights, such as ladders, scaffolds, and roofs, employers must plan projects to ensure that the job is done safely. Begin by deciding how the job will be done, what tasks will be involved, and what safety equipment may be needed to complete each task.

When estimating the cost of a job, employers should include safety equipment, and plan to have all the necessary equipment and tools available at the construction site. For example, in a roofing job, think about all of the different fall hazards, such as holes or skylights and leading edges, then plan and select fall protection suitable to that work, such as personal fall arrest systems (PFAS).
Workers who are six feet or more above lower levels are at risk for serious injury or death if they should fall. To protect these workers, employers must provide fall protection and the right equipment for the job, including the right kinds of ladders, scaffolds, and safety gear.

Different ladders and scaffolds are appropriate for different jobs. Always provide workers with the kind they need to get the job done safely. For roof work, there are many ways to prevent falls. If workers use personal fall arrest systems (PFAS), provide a harness for each worker who needs to tie off to the anchor. Make sure the PFAS fits, and regularly inspect all fall protection equipment to ensure it's still in good condition and safe to use.

Falls can be prevented when workers understand proper set-up and safe use of equipment, so they need training on the specific equipment they will use to complete the job. Employers must train workers in hazard recognition and in the care and safe use ladders, scaffolds, fall protection systems, and other equipment they'll be using on the job. OSHA has provided numerous materials and resources that employers can use during toolbox talks to train workers on safe practices to avoid falls in construction. Falls from ladders, scaffolds and roofs can be prevented and lives can be saved through three simple steps: Plan, Provide and Train.

EHS is encouraging all departments on campus who have employees working on elevated working surfaces (such as ladders, roofs, loading docks, platforms, etc..) to plan a toolbox talk that week and provide some training to employees.

There are numerous training resources associated with fall prevention. Some of these include:

- The American Ladder Institute provides training, which includes safety tips for the use of step ladders, single ladders, extension ladders, articulated ladders and mobile ladder sessions.
- NIOSH has a Ladder Safety app. The app features a multimodal indicator and a graphic-oriented guide for ladder selection, inspection, positioning, accessorizing, and safe use. The app is also available in Spanish (to view and use, select Spanish as the phone language). It is available for both iPhone and android devices. For more information, please visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/falls/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/falls/)

In addition, OSHA has various training aids and tailgate topic related to fall prevention. For more information on the Stand-Down, including additional training resources (including the resources listed above), please visit the EHS web-site at [www.ehs.utk.edu](http://www.ehs.utk.edu) or visit OSHA’s web-site at [https://www.osha.gov/StopFallsStandDown/index.html](https://www.osha.gov/StopFallsStandDown/index.html). EHS can provide fall prevention training upon request for your department. We can also perform hazard assessments on your work areas to recommend ways to protect employees from fall hazards.

Questions or More Information: EHS, 974-5084, [www.ehs.utk.edu](http://www.ehs.utk.edu)