



Working Alone

Construction jobs involve work crews of all sizes; it depends on the job and what work needs to be done. Crews often consist of 6 to 12 men and women who accomplish all the tasks. The members of the crew help keep each other safe and on-track. But what if you're the only worker assigned to a job? With no co-workers around it might be easier to let safety take a back seat. On large jobs, safety is discussed, and everyone is reminded to follow safe work practices in pre-shift safety meetings each day. Would you read a safety meeting by yourself, or fill out a job safety analysis when you're the only one doing the task? Working alone is when you need to work very cautiously and be at your safest because your well-being depends entirely on you.

Working alone presents many challenges. For instance, you don't have anyone watching your back, reminding you to put on your personal protective equipment (PPE), or giving you a heads up when you're about to make a dangerous mistake. But sometimes a job only requires one person, and that one person might be you. To make sure you complete that job without an incident, you should plan ahead and prepare for all of the hazards ahead of you.

Before you begin working alone, consider some of the following questions:

- What safety requirements does your employer expect you to follow before you start a job—pre-task plans, JSAs, permits, inspections?
- Do you know what PPE will be needed? Do you have it with you?
- Do you know where the work is going to take place—ground, scaffold, roof, basement?
- Have you taken the time to survey the area?
- Are there any visible hazards?
- Does the job require you to wear fall protection?
- Is the job going to involve hot work where sparks, welding slag, or open flames could cause a fire or explosion? Do you need a permit or fire watch?
- Will you have a fire extinguisher nearby?
- Do you need to work from a ladder?
- Do you have the right tools for the job?
- Is power and lighting available?
- Are circuits at the site protected by GFCIs?
- Where can you get drinking water and have access to restroom facilities?
- Is any of the work going to be done in a confined space?
- Do you have a way to communicate with your supervisor or call for help if there is a problem?



- What happens if you get injured? What will you do until help arrives

SAFETY REMINDER

There are also some benefits to working alone. You have fewer distractions, and you can take pride in knowing that you completed the work yourself.