

## Employee responsibility on the jobsite

Taking personal responsibility for job duties and behavior is a fundamental principle; the construction jobsite is built upon it. The average jobsite has the potential to contain the following hazards:

- falls from heights,
- electrical shock and arc blast,
- struck-by, and
- caught-in or crushed-by.

Employees need to be aware of the hazards present on their jobsite, and act responsibly when working.

### General Duty Clause

The General Duty Clause, found in the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, has become increasingly important in the last few years as OSHA has begun to utilize the clause in more and more of its penalty and enforcement actions.

The General Duty Clause reads:

(a) Each employer:

(a)(1) Shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees;

(a)(2) Shall comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under this Act.

(b) Each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to this Act which are applicable to his own actions and conduct.

According to paragraph (b), OSHA expects that employees follow safety standards: those set by OSHA and those policies set by your company.

### Does OSHA cite employees?

OSHA does not cite employees for violations of their responsibilities, but does require that each employee “comply with all occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued under the Act” that apply. Employees should do the following:

- Comply with all applicable OSHA standards.
- Follow all employer safety and health rules and regulations.
- Wear required personal protective equipment while working.
- Report hazardous conditions to the foreman or supervisor.
- Report any job-related injury or illness to the employer, and seek treatment promptly.
- Report to work fit-for-duty and be able to effectively perform job duties in a safe manner.
- Ask questions if they don't understand how to perform a job.

Employees need to watch out not only for themselves but also their coworkers. The buddy system should be alive and well on the construction jobsite.