

Working Alone in Construction

In construction, situations sometimes develop where people must work alone. The work location may be in a populated area or in a remote area. The greatest risk to working alone is that no one is available to assist if the lone worker becomes sick, injured, entrapped, or unconscious. Even when other people realize that someone is missing, it may be difficult to locate the incapacitated person. Planning and communication become critical components to the success of the operation. Here is a checklist of issues to consider when preparing to work alone.

Planning

- Before starting, determine if there is a better way to accomplish the remote task.
- Inspect the jobsite to identify and eliminate any potential or actual hazards.
- Provide any needed personal protective equipment, and instruct the worker(s) in its correct use.
- Provide any needed protective clothing, and instruct the worker(s) in its correct use.
- Review all safety and work related procedures with everyone involved.
- Establish a system that requires the remote worker to check in on a scheduled basis.
- Establish a response procedure to follow should a problem develop. Practice a response.

Communication

- Establish a method of checking on the remote worker(s).
- Be sure that the check-in schedule is clearly understood by everyone on both ends.
- Make sure all communication equipment is in good working order.
- If contact is made by two-way radio or cellular phone, make sure the transmission is not impaired.
- If contact is made by telephone or cellular phone, post the contact person's number.
- Be sure that the contact person understands the hazards of the work and schedule.
- Be sure that the contact person knows how to respond if a problem develops.

Common sense will help to determine whether a job should be done by someone working alone.

LOSS CONTROL CENTER

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

The information provided in these materials is intended to be general and advisory in nature. It shall not be considered legal advice. The Hartford does not warrant that the implementation of any view or recommendation contained herein will: (i) result in the elimination of any unsafe conditions at your business locations or with respect to your business operations; or (ii) will be an appropriate legal or business practice. The Hartford assumes no responsibility for the control or correction of hazards or legal compliance with respect to your business practices, and the views and recommendations contained herein shall not constitute our undertaking, on your behalf or for the benefit of others, to determine or warrant that your business premises, locations or operations are safe or healthful, or are in compliance with any law, rule or regulation. Readers seeking to resolve specific safety, legal or business issues or concerns related to the information provided in these materials should consult their safety consultant, attorney or business advisors. All information and representations herein are as of March 2009.