



## [OSHA Tries To Make Walking-Working Surfaces Safer For Employees with Proposed New Regulations Aimed at On-the-Job Slip and Falls](#)

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Sometimes, workplaces are so dangerous that it's not even safe to walk there. On the job work injuries from just walking in the workplace are [reported](#) by [OSHA](#) to average 20 deaths each year, as well as over 3,500 slip and fall injuries that are severe enough that the injured employee has to stop working for a period of time, missing work.

You might think these are small numbers, overall, but serious fall injuries are more common than statistics suggest. Just last month, [Ken Allen](#) represented Valparaiso's Richard Proctor and his wife Sonia in a trial where [the jury awarded the local couple \\$3.7 million for harm](#) that Mr. Proctor suffered in a work-related fall, resulting in a serious brain injury.

### *Current Federal Law Doesn't Provide Protection*

Right now, federal law does not stop most companies from keeping old, outdated, and dangerous fall protection equipment around (e.g., body belts) that was intended to protect employees from harm in the event of a fall. Old equipment, of course, can result in workers suffering greater injury from falls.

The federal government has placed regulations on walking work surfaces only upon employers in certain industries, specifically (1) construction and (2) maritime. Only those who work in these two industries are protected by federal law with things like rope descent systems.

### *OSHA Is Proposing New Regulations*

[OSHA](#) has announced that it has [drafted new regulations](#) that would [extend these protections](#) to all general industry workers. The proposal also allows [OSHA](#) inspectors to, among other things, "fine employers who jeopardize their workers' safety and lives by climbing these ladders without proper fall protection."

Read the proposed changes, appearing as [Federal Register: May 24, 2010 \(Volume 75, Number 99\) \[Proposed Rules\] \[Page 28861-29153\]](#), [here](#).