Slips, Trips, Ladders and Fall-Protection Decisions

TOPIC 08 / WRITTEN LESSON



Control the actual condition and identify the correct task and industry requirements.

Observe how the exposure occurs

Look at walking surfaces, wet areas, obstacles, access methods and work at height. Consider the busy period and actual movement of people or materials. A warning sign can communicate a temporary condition; it does not by itself repair a leak, remove an obstacle or establish safe access.

Protect before reopening

Use the approved site process to protect access, arrange a suitable alternative and assign correction. Verify the condition before reopening. Do not remove a warning solely because a scheduled time has passed while the exposure remains.

Choose suitable access and training

Do not substitute a chair or improvised platform for suitable access equipment. Review the specific task, equipment condition and required instruction with a competent person. This kit does not teach ladder operation, fall-arrest use or rescue.

Avoid a universal height shortcut

Washington's fall-protection rules contain different requirements for different work and conditions. The most-cited tables contain both four-foot and ten-foot rule categories; that is not a rule saying every task is safe below one chosen height. Apply the relevant section and industry requirements before assigning the work.

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TOPIC 08 / INSPECTION AND EVIDENCE



What an inspector may review

- Actual surfaces, obstacles and access conditions
- Control of exposure and verified reopening
- Suitable access equipment and required instruction
- Applicable fall-protection requirements for the task

Records and evidence to locate

- Location/condition register and interim protection
- Repair owner and due date
- Access-equipment review and training references
- Observed correction and new-hazard check

Typical gaps to correct

- Recurring hazards managed only with a sign
- Improvised access equipment
- Applying the wrong fall-protection rule or missing training

Worked example - fictional Harbor Supply

A wet passage at Harbor receives a sign every week, while another employee proposes using a chair to reach stored items.

The manager protects the affected area, assigns the source correction and verifies the alternate route. The high-access task is reviewed separately for suitable equipment and required training; the course does not authorize an improvised climb.

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TOPIC 08 / FACILITATOR KIT



Before the meeting

Choose a relevant, safe example; check the current rules and site procedure. Review open hazards, recent investigations and the prevention program. Arrange language or accessibility support.

0-3

State the topic, review previous corrective actions, and invite worker observations without retaliation.

3-10

Use the lesson and the worked example. Ask workers to identify the exposure, the control and the responsible person.

10-17

Use a safe walk-through or a fictional floor sketch to identify one condition, interim protection, a correction owner and the evidence needed to reopen.

17-20

Use the teach-back questions. Record actual attendees and topics, assign actions and a verification date. This 20-minute agenda is a suggested teaching plan, not a universal meeting-frequency rule.

Teach-back discussion

- What changes the actual exposure?
- Who verifies reopening?
- Which task-specific access or fall rule applies?

Use actual attendees and topics in the meeting record. Do not enter private medical details here or treat a fictional exercise as proof of a real correction.

Official references

WAC 296-880: unified fall protection

WAC 296-876: ladders

L&I most-cited rules, federal fiscal year 2025

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TOPIC 08 / FILLABLE WORKPLACE EXERCISE



Use the fictional example first. Keep real personnel and medical records in your approved secure systems.

Site / department / task

Actual observation and evidence reference

Workers consulted / language needs

Existing control and observed gap

Protective action and responsible person

Due date / verification method

What changed / remaining concern / follow-up date

Explain it back

What changes the actual exposure?

Who verifies reopening?

Which task-specific access or fall rule applies?