SAFETY BULLETIN #5

March 30, 2025

Rebar Impalement Prevention

Why Rebar Caps Matter

Steel reinforcing bars, or rebar, are a common hazard on construction sites. Stumbling or falling onto exposed steel bars can pierce or impale individuals, resulting in serious internal injuries and death. To protect workers from this hazard, OSHA requires that rebar "be guarded to eliminate the hazard of impalement." **Steel reinforced rebar caps (4”x4” min) provide the strongest and best impalement protection.**

One of the biggest impalement hazards is falling on protruding rebar. Workers can fall off steps or even trip and fall onto protruding rebar. Real life example: A construction worker was covering a load with a tarp. When finished, he jumped backwards from the side rails of the vehicle, landing on rebar. The rebar impaled the construction worker, approximately 10 inches deep.



Ways to protect yourself and team members

- ★ Identify risks early: Do a site walk before work begins to locate all exposed rebar
- ★ Install Caps Immediately: Cap rebar as soon as it is placed, not after forms are finished
- ★ Use the Right Cap for the Right Job: Only use steel-reinforced caps in areas where impalement risk exists
- ★ Train Your Crew: Make sure team members understand the difference between visual caps (mushroom caps) and OSHA approved protective ones (steel reinforced square caps)
- ★ Inspect Daily: Assign safety checks to confirm caps are still in place and undamaged.
- ★ Safety Moto: If a cap can be fitted on the exposed rebar, then cap it. If you can fall on the rebar, then cap it. If it fits in a cap, then cap it (including steel grade stakes).

Other Discussion Points:

- ★ Does our jobsite have rebar or other impalement hazards?
- ★ Do you have OSHA approved caps?
  - What do they look like?
- ★ Watch the Floridia construction work impalement newsclip.

