

Construction Accidents - Overview

Whether on a small project for an individual homeowner, or for a major commercial development, on a daily basis construction workers must deal with some of the most dangerous working conditions faced by employees in any industry. As a result, serious work-related injuries at construction sites occur with an unfortunate frequency.

Regulations, specifications, inspection requirements, and job safety programs all seek to prevent construction site accidents and promote safety awareness on the part of all parties involved in a construction project. But despite these important efforts to deal with the challenge of construction site safety, accidents occur and will undoubtedly continue to occur. These hazards can include falls from scaffolds and other elevations, being struck by moving or falling machinery, electrocution, health hazards resulting from exposure to asbestos and chemicals, injuries caused by defective or unreasonably unsafe equipment.



Who May Be Liable For A Construction Site Injury?

Depending on the size and sophistication of the construction project, there can be a wide variety of individuals involved at a construction site, including the site's landowner, design and engineering professionals, contractors (including general, "prime," and "sub"-contractors), construction managers, and equipment and material suppliers.

Speaking generally, in assessing liability for injuries at a construction site, the main determinations are the extent of a potential party's control over the premises on which the work is being done, and the degree of their control over the work itself.

Construction Site Owner

Depending on the amount of control of the premises that he or she gives over to an independent contractor, the landowner may not be considered the legal possessor of the land for the duration of the construction project. Issues of landowner liability will also turn on the degree of his or her control over the premises, as compared to control over the work itself. With this in mind, the owner or possessor of the land on which a construction project is being performed is liable for any injury to individuals (called business "invitees") involved in the project, caused by a potentially harmful condition on the land that the owner knew or should reasonably have known of.