CUMC Facilities Management and Campus Services

Safety Topic: Working at Heights

With falls among the most common causes of serious work-related injuries and death, the workplace must be set up to prevent employees from falling from ladders, overhead platforms, elevated work stations, roofs, or into holes in the floor and walls.

OSHA requires that fall protection be provided at heights of four feet or more in general industry workplaces such as ours. It is also a requirement that fall protection be provided when working over dangerous equipment and machinery, regardless of the fall distance. Employees are responsible for donning the appropriate equipment when work is performed under certain circumstances where fall protection is needed.

The following safety tips are to be followed when working at heights at CUMC.

When using wood, metal or fiberglass ladders, the following safety measures should be taken:

- Maintain three points of contact.
- Inspect wood ladders for cracks and splits in the wood.
- Inspect metal and fiberglass ladders for bends and breaks.
- Check all ladders to see that steps or rungs are tight and secure.
- Be sure that all hardware and fittings are properly and securely attached and test movable parts to see that they operate without binding or without too much free play.
- Never use a damaged ladder. Damaged ladders must be immediately taken out of service for repair or disposal.

When working on roofs, the following safety measures should be taken:

- Make sure your personal fall arrest system fits and is not defective.
- Always stay connected when utilizing a personal fall arrest system for fall protection.
- Protect all holes and/or openings.

When using powered equipment such as a Genie lift, be mindful of the following:

- The lift must be kept in safe condition.
- Use the lift only for its designed purpose.
- Ensure the key is controlled to prevent unauthorized access.

For more information or questions about fall protection, please speak with your supervisor or contact a member of the Campus Life Safety and Regulatory Compliance team.