



## **GUARDRAILS**

**Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission/  
Health & Safety Division**

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Guardrails protect you from falls that can seriously injure or even kill. The amount of protection guardrails provide depends on how they are constructed and maintained. Most guardrails are built of strong materials and are usually solid when first put up. As time goes by, however, guardrails are often abused, weakened, broken, or moved and not replaced.

### **Missing or weakened guardrails**

Sometimes sections of guardrails must be taken down so that materials or equipment can be brought in. These sections often aren't replaced or if they are, they're hastily thrown back up. Weakened guardrails are sometimes more dangerous than no guardrails at all, because they give a false sense of security.

### **Follow these rules**

We can help avoid guardrail accidents if we follow a few simple rules:

1. As you go about your job, get into the habit of checking guardrails. If you discover a weakened or a missing section, correct the situation if you can. Otherwise, report it so that the hazard can be eliminated.
2. If you bump a rail with material or equipment, check it at once if you suspect you may have weakened it. If you discover you've broken a rail, upright, or toeboard, repair it if you can. Otherwise, report it so that the hazard can be repaired.
3. When repairing or replacing guardrails, remember you're exposed to the very danger that you are providing protection against. Perhaps you should be using a safety belt and lanyard.

### **Keep your guard (rails) up**

Different types of construction may require different types of guardrails. But the points we've covered today apply to all. If you have suggestions, make them known so that we can continue to keep our guardrails up and our accidents down.

