



WEEKLY SAFETY TALK #11: TAILGATE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Skylight Hazards: The Hole Rule, Cover Strength, Guardrails, and Who Is Responsible

Foreman: work through these with the crew on site. Point at the actual roof, the actual gear. Then run the quick check and sign off.

TALK IT THROUGH (10 MINUTES, ON THE JOB SITE)

1 Is a skylight a fall hazard, and which rule covers it?

Prompt: Yes. OSHA classifies a skylight as a hole. More than 6 ft up in construction (1926.501(b)(4)), 4 ft or more in general industry (1910.28(b)(3)), the worker is protected by a cover, a guardrail, or fall arrest.

2 What does a cover have to do before it counts?

Prompt: Hold twice the weight of the workers, tools, and material that may be on it at one time, be secured against wind and boots, and be marked HOLE or COVER (1926.502(i)). A 300 lb load on the cover means a 600 lb cover.

3 Can the skylight or a screen be the cover?

Prompt: Only if the employer can prove it meets the twice-the-load rule (OSHA letter, Dec. 20, 2007). The old 200 lb screen rule ended January 17, 2017. Domes and screens deteriorate over time; ask the age and the rating.

4 Can a warning line or a safety monitor protect a skylight?

Prompt: No. Those are edge options under 1926.501(b)(10). The hole paragraph allows a cover, a guardrail around the opening (42 in top rail that holds 200 lb, 1926.502(b)), or a personal fall arrest system, and nothing else.

5 Who covers the skylights on a multi-employer job, and how fast?

Prompt: Every employer with workers exposed; a sub that relies on the GC must check that the GC follows through (OSHA letter, Nov. 17, 2004). The duty applies immediately; brevity of exposure is no defense (letter, Sept. 5, 2006).

QUICK CHECK: CIRCLE THE ANSWERS AS A CREW

- A. An unguarded plastic dome skylight 20 ft above the floor is: Protected A hole Fine inside a warning line
B. The heaviest load that may be on a cover at one time is 300 lb. The cover must hold: 300 lb 600 lb 200 lb
C. A 775 lb skylight rating with no safety factor allows, as its own cover: 775 lb 387 1/2 lb 1,550 lb

CREW SIGN-OFF (29 CFR 1926.503(b) requires written training certification)

NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE

Foreman / competent person: _____ Job site: _____ Date: _____

Key: A) A hole; cover it, guard it, or tie off (1926.501(b)(4)) B) 600 lb; twice the load (1926.502(i)(2)) C) 387 1/2 lb (OSHA letter, Dec. 20, 2007)
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