



# Protección en Construcción

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4 OCT-DEC 2009

## Community Participation in PenC

By Gretchen Lawtosky JSI Research & Training Institute

Participation of Lawrence residents is one of the most important features and keys in the success of Protección en Construcción: Lawrence Latino Safety Partnership (PenC). To build a relationship between PenC staff and the Lawrence community, we hired Promotores (*outreach workers*), who are Latino residents, to conduct outreach programs and engage Latino workers, their family members, and residents to provide information through focus groups, meetings with PenC staff, and surveys. The information we have received has made a significant difference to our plans because it helped us focus on issues identified by the community that are of the greatest concern to them. They know their community best because speak the language, share the culture, understand how the community functions, and have the greatest stake in its success.



Without their involvement, we would be designing a project based on what we think is in the best interest of the community, but by asking and listening to the community. We have been able to design the project based on priority issues as defined by them. One example is including cultural competency training for supervisors as part of our worksite safety program — a suggestion that came from workers in focus groups. PenC project partners including the Mayor's Health Task Force, the Laborers Union Local 175, and the PenC Networking Committee all play leading roles in bringing in ideas from Lawrence residents to make our project stronger.

## News from the Partners

PenC will conduct two important tasks during the fall and winter seasons. The first will be a survey of workers, construction contractors, Networking Committee members, and other project participants in order to understand more about what we have learned from interviews and focus groups conducted during the assessment phase. The second one will be starting the implementation of the PenC worksite safety program., "Leaders in Safe Construction" or LISC. Contractors who employing any Latino worker in the Greater Lawrence area are eligible for the program and there is no cost to join!. Please join us in these two important activities. For additional, information, contact us at PenC (978) 934-2587, and speak with Lenore Azaroff or e-mail us at [PenC@uml.edu](mailto:PenC@uml.edu).

### Editors

Luz Marin

Max Sun

Research Assistant PenC

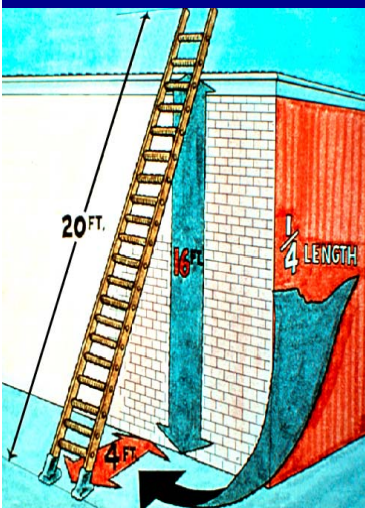
[Luz\\_Marin@student.uml.edu](mailto:Luz_Marin@student.uml.edu)

[Chuan\\_Sun@student.uml.edu](mailto:Chuan_Sun@student.uml.edu)

## FALL PREVENTION REMINDERS:



The distance between the foot of the ladder and the wall must be  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the height where the ladder touches the wall.



# Slippery Surfaces: Falls and Trips

Construction workers stand, work, walk and climb on dangerous surfaces contributing to accidents, injuries and even deaths. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistic (BLS), of the 680 fatal falls in the United States in 2008, 122 involved falls from roofs, 115 from ladders, 82 on the same level, 40 from ground level and 28 down stairs or steps. Icy and wet roofs, ladders, scaffolds, or floors increase the likelihood of falls from heights or at the same level.

Some precautions that can be taken in order to avoid injuries due to slippery surfaces: keep job areas clean and tidy; install handrails from start to finish of ladders or stairs; supply mechanical aids to carry loads to avoid carrying them on ladders; supply workers with the proper safety boots.

## Scaffolds

Scaffolding system safety is crucial to all workers who use them. Falling from a scaffold due to lack of protection is absolutely an avoidable tragedy. An improperly installed scaffold guardrail is one of the biggest problems. Fall protection must be provided on scaffolds at height greater than 10 feet high. In order to prevent workers falling from a scaffold system, a guardrail system must be installed along all open sides and ends. The top-rail of guardrails must be installed from 39 to 45 inches above the platform. Then, the mid-rails of the guard system must be installed halfway between the platform and the top-rail. If mesh or panels are used in this system, they should also be installed from the top of the guardrail to the bottom. Top-rails must withstand 200 pounds of downward or outward force, and must not be made of steel or plastic banding. At the same time, all mid-rails must withstand at least 150 pounds of downward or outward force.

*Source: National Association of Home Builders(2003) Scaffold Safety Handbook. Washington DC*

## Ladders

Ladders must be in good shape before they are used. The selection of ladders depends on the proposed loading weight and the purposes it will be used for. Before climbing, clear away all sharp objects in the surrounding area in order to avoid double injury in case of a fall. During climbing, a ladder's upper rung must be extended 3 feet above the upper level. Keep at least 3 points of your body in contact with ladder while climbing and be sure to keep both hands free of loading materials. The distance between the foot of the ladder and the wall must be  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the height where the ladder touches the wall.

*Source: National Association of Home Builders(2006) Fall Protection Handbook. Washington DC*



# Is there silica exposure in your workplace?

In the United States, each year 300 people die from a disease called silicosis, and it is estimated by OSHA that two million are exposed to silica dust. A lot of materials in nature contain silica, but if operations with these materials do not generate dust, there is little risk of inhaling silica. Thus if you work with any of the following materials: abrasives, concrete, sand, Portland cement, polish compound; or perform any of the following activities: brick masonry, construction labor, crushing, grinding or cutting concrete then it is likely that silica is airborne and you could inhale it. Therefore, the best possible permanent solution to reducing or eliminating the hazard should be used. Examples of solutions include installing a water hose to wet down the dust where it is created, using concrete/masonry saws that provide water to the blade, installing dust collection systems onto machines or equipment that generates dust.

*Adapted from OSHA e-tools (www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/silica/index.html)*

REMINDERS

To reduce sílica hazard:  
Using a water hose to wet down the dust at the point of generation

## PenC Website

One of the PenC goals is to spread effective construction safety improvements through the Lawrence community, and nationwide. Now, that we are two years into the project, it is time for a PenC Website. The PenC Website has been designed as a valuable communication instrument between PenC partnership members as well as contractors, workers, community residents, and researchers interested in the progress and results of our project. The PenC Website has a special section designed for contractors with information about progress in our project, materials to download, and ways to contact us.

**The PenC Website is available in English and Spanish.** You also will be able to find past issues of our PenC Newsletter in.



**We will go live very soon!!!**

Please check us out at [www.Lawrenceworksafe.org](http://www.Lawrenceworksafe.org)

Protección en Construcción

Welcome! > ENGLISH

Bienvenidos! > ESPAÑOL

Welcome to Protección en Construcción (PenC): The Lawrence Latino Safety Partnership

PenC WebSite

[www.Lawrenceworksafe.org](http://www.Lawrenceworksafe.org)

# New PenC member

PenC has a new member, Max Sun. He has joined our PenC team as a research assistant. Max came from China, and has three years work experience in the manufacturing industry as an Industrial Engineer. He will pursue his studies further Master's Program in Ergonomics and Safety at UMass Lowell.



## PenC Zooming In

*Find at least 5 ways to make these construction sites safer. Send us your responses which will feature in the next Newsletter edition. The best responses will receive a beautiful **Protección en Construcción T-Shirt**.*

*Please send your answers to:*

Proteccion en Construcción PenC

University of Massachusetts

One University Avenue Kitson Hall 200 Lowell, MA 01854



*Picture 1*



*Picture 2*



*Picture 3*



*Picture 4*