

Rebar and Impalement

About 8 minutes to deliver

Protruding steel does not have to be six feet up to kill somebody, and mushroom caps are not all rated for a fall.

1926.701(b) is one sentence: all protruding reinforcing steel, onto and into which employees could fall, shall be guarded to eliminate the hazard of impalement.

Notice what it does not say. It does not say six feet. It does not say vertical. A trip at ground level onto a dowel sticking out of a footing is exactly the hazard the rule is about, and it is how most of these happen.

TWO WAYS TO GUARD IT

- Cap it. Plastic or steel-reinforced caps over the ends.
- Or bend it over, or cover the whole area with a plank or a mat that carries the load.

THE CAPS ARE NOT ALL THE SAME

This is the part that gets missed. An ordinary plastic mushroom cap keeps somebody from scratching themselves walking past. It is not rated to stop a falling body — a plastic cap under a falling worker splits or slides down the bar, and the bar goes through it.

Where a worker could fall onto the steel from any height, you need a cap that is rated for impalement protection — the ones with a steel plate embedded in them, or an engineered cover. Read the label. If it does not say it is rated for fall protection, treat it as a scratch guard only.

ON THE JOB

- Cap as you place. Not at the end of the day, not before the inspection. The bar is dangerous from the moment it is standing.
- Walk the whole area at the end of each pour and each shift. Caps get knocked off, blown off, and taken for other work.
- Form stakes, anchor bolts, and threaded rod are the same hazard and get the same treatment.
- Look at what is below you as well as around you. Working above uncapped steel is a fall hazard with a much worse ending.

CARRYING AND CUTTING

- Rebar ends at eye height in a carried bundle. Carry it at the same height as the person in front of you and call your turns.
- Wear the gloves and the eye protection when you cut and tie — the ends are sharp, the tie wire ends are sharper, and both are at face height when you are bent over a mat.

ASK THE CREW

- Is there any uncapped steel on this site right now that somebody could fall onto?
- Are the caps we are using rated for impalement, or are they scratch guards?
- Who is walking the pour at the end of the shift to check?

29 CFR 1926.701 • 29 CFR 1926.501

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Rebar and Impalement

About 8 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1926.701 · 29 CFR 1926.501

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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