



Trash Chutes

Trash chutes (also called disposal chutes) are commonly used on high rise projects. They are also used by remodeler's and roofers to keep their job sites cleaner and safer.

Guide for Discussion:

- No material shall be dropped to any point lying outside the exterior walls of the structure unless the area is effectively protected.
- Whenever materials are to be dropped in an unprotected area an enclosed chute will be used.
- The chute should be fully enclosed on all sides. See WAC 296-155-785.
- Never allow someone using a chute to be subjected to material falling from above.
- Be sure the chute door can be securely latched in a closed position.
- Be sure all debris is collected into a suitable container (i.e., trash barrels, back of a dump truck).
- Never allow debris to fall into an unguarded or unsecured area.
- Never allow debris to accumulate to overflow.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the trash accumulation area.
- Never put solvent, oil, flammable liquids or materials soaked with any flammable liquids into a trash chute.
- Be sure the chute is properly guarded with standard guardrails. (See Guardrails "Tool Box Talk" on page 55.)
- If attached to a wall opening, standard guardrails, a safety net system or a personal fall arrest system (PFAS) must be used.

Additional Discussion Notes:

Chutes shall be designed and constructed of such strength as to eliminate failure due to impact of debris or other materials loaded on them. In short, don't use a 1x6 when 2x6's are needed. Where debris is dumped from a wheelbarrow or other mechanical equipment, a toeboard or bumper not less than four (4) inches thick and six (6) inches high will be mounted at each chute opening.

Remember: The use of trash chutes can greatly improve the housekeeping of any construction project. But unless the chutes are properly constructed and used, they will do nothing but create additional hazards for the workers. Be conscious of what you are doing around a chute.

NOTE: Always promote a discussion on any of the topics covered in the Weekly Safety Meeting. Should any question arise that you cannot answer, don't hesitate to contact the Safety Director.