

Plastering Work – Staying Safe While Plastering Outdoors Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Fall & Slips Risk:** Plasterers working on scaffolds, ladders, or uneven outdoor surfaces are at high risk of falls, requiring fall protection, solid foot bases, and non-slip footwear.
2. **Dust Inhalation:** Mixing and sanding plaster can generate hazardous dust, including potential silica content from additives. Respiratory protection (e.g., N95 or better) and dust controls are essential.
3. **Eye & Skin Irritation:** Plaster dust and wet materials can irritate eyes and skin—goggles, gloves, long sleeves, and wash stations help mitigate this hazard.
4. **Tool-Related Injuries:** Chisels, trowels, and power tools used in plastering can cause lacerations or puncture wounds—cut-resistant gloves and proper tool use training are needed.
5. **Ergonomic Strain:** Repetitive arm motion, overhead work, and lifting of bags and buckets can lead to muscle strains—ergonomic practices and lift assists reduce risk.
6. **Trip Hazards:** Loose materials, hoses, bags, and uneven terrain pose trip/fall dangers—clean workspace setup, clear paths, and sturdy footwear minimize incidents.

STATS

- In 2024, OSHA recorded 5,190 workplace fatalities, with construction accounting for 21% (1,090 cases). Falls (423 cases) were the leading cause for plasterers, followed by struck-by incidents (316 cases), emphasizing the need for fall protection and HVSA during outdoor work.

- In 2024, PPE violations (29 CFR 1910.132) ranked 6th in construction (1,876 citations), with cases involving inadequate chemical-resistant PPE for plastering. Respiratory Protection (29 CFR 1926.1153) violations for dust exposure ranked 5th (2,500 citations).
- A 2022 NIOSH study found that 25% of plasterers with skin injuries lacked proper chemical-resistant gloves or waterproof clothing, increasing risks of burns from wet plaster.
- WorkSafeBC reported 25–30 annual construction fatalities in British Columbia (2020–2023), with plasterers at risk from falls (40%) and struck-by incidents (15%) during outdoor work. Hard hats and HVSA are critical for mitigation.
- CCOHS 2023 data showed that workplaces enforcing chemical-resistant gloves and respirators reduced plastering-related injuries by 20%, particularly for outdoor tasks involving dust or wet plaster.
- In 2024, Ontario introduced fines up to \$500,000 for repeat OHS violations, including PPE non-compliance, impacting plastering contractors failing to provide proper gloves, respirators, or fall protection.