



# WORKING ALONE SAFETY

## TOOLBOX TALK: Working Alone Safety

RATTLIR Safety Series – "Strike Before It Bites"

### Purpose

Working alone introduces unique risks because there is no one immediately available to assist, call for help, or intervene when hazards escalate. Power-generation facilities, industrial plants, and large job sites contain high-energy systems, elevated structures, and remote areas where solitary work increases the likelihood and severity of incidents. This toolbox talk provides guidance for planning, communication, situational awareness, and emergency preparedness when working alone.

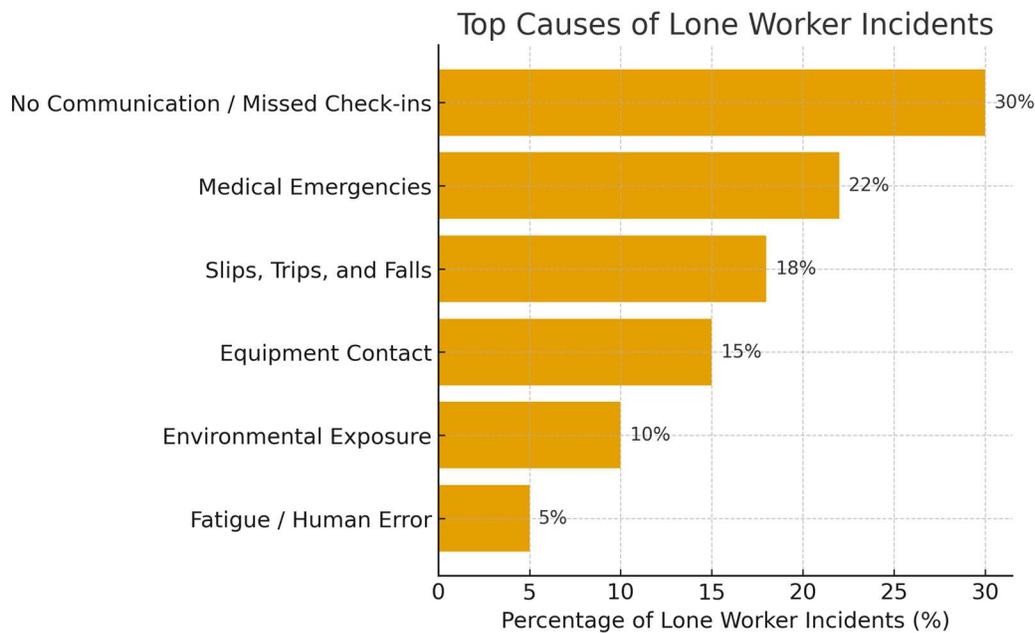


Figure 1 – Top Causes of Lone Worker Incidents

### Lone Worker Hazards in Industrial Environments

- Delayed emergency response due to absence of witnesses.
- Medical emergencies such as heat stress, fainting, or cardiac events going unnoticed.
- Reduced visibility and increased trip hazards in isolated or low-light areas.
- Working near steam lines, electrical rooms, or rotating equipment without backup.



# WORKING ALONE SAFETY

- Environmental factors such as extreme heat, cold, wildlife, or remote outdoor locations.

## Communication Requirements

- Establish check-in intervals before the job begins.
- Maintain communication via radio, phone, or approved lone-worker device.
- Missed check-ins must trigger immediate follow-up by supervision.
- Notify the control room before entering isolated or restricted areas.
- Test radios, phones, and GPS trackers at the start of each shift.

## Planning and Hazard Analysis

- A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) must be performed prior to all lone work.
- High-risk tasks should never be performed alone.
- Workers must review emergency response steps before beginning the job.
- Ensure the lone worker is trained and capable of performing the task safely.

## Tasks That Must Not Be Performed Alone

- Confined space entry.
- Electrical work inside energized boundaries.
- Work at heights requiring fall protection.
- Steam system operations such as opening drains, vents, or valves.
- Hot work involving open flames or spark-producing tools.
- Heavy lifting or manual handling requiring two-person techniques.

## Situational Awareness and Behavior

- Lone workers must slow down and verify surroundings before proceeding.
- Avoid assumptions—verify conditions before entering hazardous areas.
- Fatigue increases the likelihood of errors; ensure proper rest and hydration.
- Wear high-visibility PPE to increase visibility for other workers or vehicles.

## Emergency Preparedness

- Know the location of nearest emergency equipment, muster points, and exits.
- Carry a functioning radio, phone, or emergency beacon device.
- Ensure GPS or location-tracking systems are active when required.
- Pre-plan escape routes and emergency procedures before starting work.



# WORKING ALONE SAFETY

## Discussion Questions

- Do you understand the communication and check-in requirements for working alone?
- Are you aware of which tasks cannot be performed alone?
- Do you have the correct equipment and emergency plan before beginning lone work?

## RATTLIR Takeaway

Working alone amplifies hazards by eliminating immediate assistance and delaying emergency response. Lone workers must counter these risks with strong communication, deliberate planning, and constant situational awareness. RATTLIR strikes before it bites by ensuring that workers remain visible, connected, and proactive when operating alone in high-risk environments.