

Roof Tear-Off: Verify the Deck and Debris Route

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Why this matters

Removing roof coverings changes what supports the crew and reveals conditions hidden underneath. Waste also adds weight before it leaves. Verify the next section and its debris route before disturbing it.

Objective: Confirm material hazards, deck release and protected waste transfer before tear-off advances.

Key hazards or failure points

Unknown asbestos or lead; weak decking; new holes; sharp waste; concentrated debris loads; falling material; occupied areas below.

Practical controls

- Use the released material investigation, roof-condition information and removal sequence. Resolve possible asbestos, lead and other hazardous materials before disturbance. This briefing does not authorize abatement or structural deck demolition.
- Maintain the required access, fall protection, opening protection and rescue arrangements as each section changes. Keep tools and accumulated waste within the actual permitted loading arrangement; do not hide holes beneath loose coverings.
- Contain debris and use the planned lowering or chute system with a controlled receiving area. Assign people to coordinate upper and lower work. Do not throw waste over an edge or improvise a drop route.

Verify It in the Field

The supervisor matches the proposed section with the investigation and deck/load documents. From protected access, compare visible conditions with those records; record the source, location, checker, actual result and time. Unknowns mean HOLD.

Before removal, check the protected path, work boundary and waste staging against the plan. Identify who protects newly exposed openings and who can resolve a deck defect before the crew advances.

The waste lead checks system setup and container readiness using its instructions, then confirms separation below with the receiving lead. Recheck before transfer after an interruption or change; record deficiencies and their correction.

Stop and reassess

Stop for unassessed material, deck damage, concealed services, a new unprotected opening, growing waste beyond approved limits or a failed receiving boundary. Withdraw by the safe route, isolate affected work and obtain the required reassessment; never step onto suspect decking to test it.

Ask the crew

1. What releases the next roof section for removal?
2. Where can debris accumulate without exceeding the plan?
3. Who confirms that the receiving area is clear?

Use the task plan and required specialist decisions before exposure.

Sources: OSHA 1926.501; 1926.252; 1926.1101; 1926.62; actual removal plan.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/roof-tear-off-deck-debris-route