



Weekly Safety Meeting

Falls from Heights

Falls are among the most common causes of serious work-related injuries and deaths. Employers must take measures in their workplaces to prevent employees from falling off overhead platforms, elevated workstations, or into holes in the floor and walls.

Falls are the second leading cause of occupational fatalities and disabling injuries in the United States. Each year, over 500 workers die in fall-related accidents and over 300,000 workers suffer a disabling injury. Most of these fatalities and disabling injuries, according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), are the result of falls from elevations of six feet or less.

Where a fall hazard exists, there are two acceptable options; one, eliminate the hazard or, two, provide protection against it. Ideally, it is best to eliminate the hazard.

Fall protection is a means or system used to protect employees from falling from an elevated walking/working surface. Fall protection involves the elimination, prevention, and/or control of fall hazards.

Whenever feasible, employers should always set up temporary floors, guards, toeboards, or other physical barriers to falls instead of having workers rely on nets or tying off for all protection. When not feasible, personal fall protection or safety nets must be used. No work should proceed unless the necessary fall protection is in place. The use of fall protection can prevent serious injury and save your life.

Fall Protection Equipment Is Broadly Divided into Two Categories:

- The first is fall prevention equipment. Guardrails and coverings at floor openings and safety-interlock gates on elevated platforms are designed to prevent falls. A body harness worn by workers can also be used to tether them to an area away from the fall hazard.
- The second is fall arrest equipment. These systems are designed to save the worker if they fall. A worker may wear personal protective equipment consisting of a body harness and lanyard attached to a lifeline or an anchor point.

Fall Restraint:

Fall Restraint includes such items as a guardrail or parapet wall. It can also consist of a personal fall restraint system, which keeps you from reaching an unprotected "fall" point. Guardrails (on scaffolds, aerial lifts, and on the perimeter of buildings) are considered to be a fall restraint type of fall protection.

Fall Arrest:

Fall Arrest STOPS you if you're falling. If you are at risk of falling (General Industry 4' and Construction 6') you must use appropriate fall protection equipment. One type of appropriate fall protection equipment is the personal fall arrest system. The entire personal fall arrest system must be capable of withstanding the tremendous impact forces involved in a fall. A person without protection will free fall 4 feet in ½ second and 16 feet in 1 second!

A personal fall arrest system includes a full body harness, a shock absorbing lanyard or a rope grab and vertical lifeline, and a sound anchorage able to support a load of 5,000 pounds.

DO

- Pick an anchorage point that will support 5,000 lbs. per worker (strong enough to support a pickup truck);
- Fall arrest systems should be rigged so employees can't free fall more than 6 feet (or contact any lower level);
- Tie off above your head. A six-foot person who ties off at the feet could free-fall as much as 12 feet;
- Place your anchorage directly above/behind your work area to void potential swing fall hazards;
- Use the shortest lanyard possible. The shorter the tie-off, the shorter the fall;
- Have anchorage points selected by a competent person; and
- Have fall prevention equipment such as guardrails and coverings at floor openings and safety-interlock

DON'T

- Do not tie off to vent pipes or a non-structured non-designated area;
- Do not tie a knot in lanyard. This will reduce its strength;
- Do not use water pipes, electrical conduits, light fixtures, or guardrails as anchor points;
- Do not use any lanyards without a self-locking snap hook;
- Do not join multiple lanyards together to reach an anchorage;
- Do not allow more than one worker to tie-off to the same anchorage unless it is designed and approved by an engineer;
- Do not unhook from fall protection while exposed to a fall greater than 6 feet;
- Do not allow someone else to rig your equipment unless you verify that it has been done correctly; and
- Do not use an anchorage that is not independent of any anchorage used to support or suspend platforms.

If you use any type of fall protection equipment, including personal fall protection or safety nets, be sure to check that you are using the right equipment for the job—labeled as meeting the requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)—and that the equipment is in good condition.

CHANCE TAKERS ARE ACCIDENT MAKERS!!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests