



Safety Tip of the Week

Falls From Heights

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



Fall Protection Equipment:

Fall protection equipment is broadly divided into two categories. The first category 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 the worker can also be used to tether him/her to an area away from the fall hazards. The second category is fall arrest equipment, which is designed to save the worker if he/she falls. He/she may wear personal protective equipment consisting of a body harness and lanyard attached to a lifeline or an anchor point. Another option is to have a net slung below the work area to protect the worker.

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 a fall restraint type of fall protection.

Fall Arrest:

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 free falls 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 5000 pounds.

CHANCE TAKERS...ARE ACCIDENT MAKERS!!