Fall Protection – Landscaping Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

There was a belief that landscape workers only work on the ground or at street level. But as awareness of environmental concerns increases, landscape workers are being called on more often to work on rooftop gardens.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

Rooftop gardens may not have appropriate guardrails, and some may be on steep roofs. Falls from heights can result in severe injuries, such as head and spine injuries, and even death.

Common hazards include the following:

- Cuts and fractures from falls or slips
- Head injuries, multiple traumas, or death from falling over unguarded or inadequately protected roof edges

Incident examples

- A landscape worker suffered multiple fractures after slipping on frost on a sloped roof garden.
- A worker was watering plants on a roof garden and backed against the short decorative edge wall. He lost his balance and died when he fell three stories (12 m) to the ground.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Initial Fall Protection Safety Checklist

- If you could fall more than 3 m (10 ft.), your employer must provide appropriate fall protection before you start work:
    - Guardrails must be installed whenever practicable.

    - If guardrails aren’t practicable, fall restraint systems must be used to prevent workers from getting too close to the edge of the building or structure.
    - If fall restraint systems aren’t practicable, fall arrest systems must be used to stop workers in mid-fall. Examples include safety nets and full body harnesses attached by lifelines to secure anchors.
- Never wear a safety belt in a fall arrest situation. If you fall while wearing a safety belt, you could suffer severe back and abdominal injuries. Safety belts are only meant to be used in fall restraint systems, to prevent falls from occurring in the first place.
- Wear your personal fall protection according to the manufacturers’ instructions.
- Inspect your personal fall protection before each use. If it is damaged or worn, have it repaired or replaced.

Responsibilities of Employers

- Maintain and repair fall protection equipment.
- Have a written fall protection plan if workers could fall more than 7.5 m (25 ft.) in a location that is not protected by permanent guardrails.
- Train workers on the safe use of fall protection.
- Demonstrate how to put on personal fall protection.
- Demonstrate how to install fall restraint systems.
- Remind workers about the PPE they are required to wear.
- Provide adequate supervision after training.

Workers

- Follow safe work procedures.
- Wear appropriate PPE.
- Inspect fall protection and restraint systems and report any defects or necessary repairs.

FINAL WORD

As environmental concerns heighten, it is projected that landscape workers will be called in to provide more services to the growing

market of rooftop gardens.