Fall Protection – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Primary hazards and types of injuries related to fall protection in landscaping.

1. Falls from Heights

- **Elevated Work Areas:** Landscapers often work on ladders, scaffolds, or elevated platforms, which increases the risk of falling.
- **Improper Ladder Use:** Incorrect use of ladders, such as using the wrong ladder type, overreaching, or placing ladders on unstable surfaces, can result in falls.

2. Slips, Trips, and Falls

- Uneven Terrain: Landscapers frequently work on uneven or slippery surfaces.
- Wet or Muddy Conditions: Wet grass, mud, or loose gravel can increase the risk of slipping.

3. Inadequate Fall Protection Systems

- Improper Equipment: Not using safety harnesses, and guardrails, when working at heights can lead to serious injuries.
- Improperly Installed Equipment: Incorrect installation or maintenance of fall protection equipment.

4. Human Factors

- Fatigue and Distraction: Tired and distracted workers are more likely to make mistakes.
- Inadequate Training: Workers who are not properly trained in fall protection measures.

STATS

- Falls are the leading cause of death in the construction industry, which includes landscaping. In 2021, there were 680 fatalities related to falls from elevations across all industries, accounting for 13% of total workplace fatalities in the USA.
- Fall protection was the most frequently cited OSHA violation in 2023, with 7,271 violations recorded.
- Falls from heights are the leading cause of fatalities, with a significant number of these occurring in the landscaping and construction sectors.
- Falls also result in a high number of non-fatal injuries, including fractures, sprains, and head injuries. In 2020, there were 49,250 reported non-fatal injuries due to falls from elevations.
- A study in Ontario Canada showed a 19% reduction in fall-from-height injuries after implementing mandatory training standards, indicating the impact of effective training on reducing fall-related injuries.
- Falls in Canada lead to severe injuries such as fractures, concussions, and soft tissue injuries. The emphasis on proper training and equipment is crucial to mitigating these risks.