Fall Protection Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

You might think you can get a job done faster if you don’t have to spend time putting on safety equipment. But cutting corners can have devastating effects. Falls remain one of the top causes of death in construction. It’s the law to use fall protection whenever a worker faces serious risk of injury.

What’s the Danger

PERSONAL FALL PROTECTION

Personal fall protection systems need a tie off and what’s called fall arrest and travel restraint. Fall arrest stops a fall within a few feet of the worker’s original position A full body harness is required with a fall arrest system. The system typically consists of a full body harness, a lanyard, a rope grab, a lifeline, and a lifeline anchor. Workers need to wear it when working on a rolling scaffold that is being moved. Workers also need to wear it when using or getting on and off suspended access equipment. There should be an emergency plan in place in case an employee becomes suspended in a harness.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

THE IMPORTANCE OF FALL PROTECTION

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

FALL REDUCTION

OSHA requires that fall protection be provided at elevations of four feet in general industry workplaces, five feet in shipyards,

six feet in the construction industry and eight feet in longshoring operations. In addition, OSHA requires that fall protection be provided when working over dangerous equipment and machinery, regardless of the fall distance.

EFFECTIVE FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Effective fall protection comes in two basic forms: fall restraint systems (such as rails or toe boards) to prevent employees from falling in the first place, and fall arrest systems (including harnesses or safety nets) to break an employee's fall.

Guardrails and handrails

Toe boards

Full-body or chest harness

Safety net

Proper scaffolding

WHAT TO ADDRESS IN A FALL PROTECTION PLAN FOR WORKER SAFETY

A fall protection plan is a safety plan for workers who will be at elevated work areas.

1. **Assess All Fall Hazards In The Work Area – Holes, Skylights, Platforms, Sharps, Debris**

An essential step to take when developing a fall protection plan is identifying all existing and potential fall hazards in the work area. The 5 fall hazards include: holes, skylights, platforms, sharp edges, and debris.

1. **Fall Protection Applications, And The Equipment Needed To Work Safely.**

   - Fall Arrest
   - Fall Restraint
   - Work Positioning
   - Rescue/Confined Space

Potential equipment includes:

- Full Body Harnesses
- Lanyards
- Horizontal lifelines
- Guardrails
- Anchorage Connectors
- Self-Retracting Lifelines

1. **Correct Procedures For Assembly, Maintenance, Inspection, And Disassembly Of Fall Protection Systems Used.**

Assembly and disassembly of all equipment must be done according to the product manufacturer's recommended procedures. Inspection of all safety equipment must be done by the end user before each use. Additionally, a Competent Person needs to inspect the user's equipment in intervals of no more than one year (or more frequently if required by the manufacturer). An organization must have a plan for inspection in order to comply with OSHA 1926.502(d)(21), and any defective equipment must be tagged and removed from use immediately.

1. **Correct Procedures For Handling, Storage, And Securing Of Tools And Materials.**

Organizations must have a plan to ensure that their fall protection equipment is handled and secured properly. If not stored properly, equipment can become contaminated or otherwise damaged and will not be safe to use. Contamination can include rust, corrosion, discoloration, and deformation, etc.

1. **Training Methods For The Employees Working On The Jobsite.**

All new and current employees should be given instructions on the proper use of fall protection devices before they begin to work. Prior to permitting employees into areas where fall hazards exist, all employees must also be trained regarding fall protection plan requirements.

1. **The Method For Prompt, Safe Rescue Of Injured Workers (I.E., Your Rescue Plan).**

A plan for the rescue and recovery of fallen workers is essential to include in all fall protection plans. OSHA requires that employers shall provide for prompt rescue of employees in the event of a fall, or shall ensure that employees are able to rescue themselves.

1. **The Fall Protection Plan Must Be Jobsite Specific.**

Every job is different and will present different types of fall hazards. It is extremely important that each jobsite is analyzed for these hazards, and that they are eliminated prior to the beginning of any work.

1. **The Fall Protection Plan Must Be Available To Employees.**

Your written fall protection plan should be reviewed before work begins on any jobsite. Have a sheet for employees to sign at the jobsite stating that they have been trained in and understand the fall protection plan.

FINAL WORD

Most industrial and manufacturing worksites have work tasks at elevated levels. The key for worker safety is having a detailed and effective fall protection plan.