Fall Protection Plan Meeting Kit

FALL PROTECTION IS IMPORTANT

Employers must set up the workplace to prevent employees from falling off of overhead platforms, elevated work stations or into holes in the floor and walls. 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.

FALL PROTECTION PLAN FOR WORKERS

A fall protection plan is a safety plan for workers who will be at elevated work areas. Having a detailed fall protection plan is essential to ensure the highest degree of worker safety.

WHAT TO ADDRESS IN A FALL PROTECTION PLAN

1. Assess All Fall Hazards In The Work Area.

An essential step to take when developing a fall protection plan is identifying all existing and potential fall hazards in the work area. There are many different types of hazards that are detrimental to worker safety. **The 5 fall hazards to watch for include: holes, skylights, platforms, sharp edges, and debris.**

2. The Fall Protection Applications Employees Will Be Working In, And The Equipment Needed

Potential fall protection applications include:

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

Potential equipment includes:

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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 provide for prompt rescue of employees in the event of a fall, or ensure that employees are able to rescue themselves.

7. 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.

8. The Fall Protection Plan Must Be Available To Employees.

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

KEEP WORKERS SAFE FROM FALLS

Vigilance is the key to keep workers safe when working at heights.

- Guard every floor hole into which a worker can accidentally walk (using a railing and toe-board or a floor hole cover).
- Provide a guard rail and toe-board around every elevated open sided platform, floor or runway.
- Regardless of height, if a worker can fall into or onto dangerous machines or equipment (such as a vat of acid or a conveyor belt) employers must provide guardrails and toe-boards to prevent workers from falling and getting injured.
- Other means of fall protection that may be required on certain jobs include safety harness and line, safety nets, stair railings and handrails.

- Select and provide required personal protective equipment at no cost to workers.
- Train workers about job hazards in a language that they can understand.

FINAL WORD

Fall protection is not just for working at heights. It can also include slippery or unstable surfaces, working on elevated surfaces, sloping surfaces (e.g. roof), or working in close proximity to an unprotected edge, hole or pit.