

TOOLBOX TALK

Fall Protection

WHY THIS MATTERS

Falls are the #1 cause of death in construction. Every year, hundreds of workers die and thousands are seriously injured from falls. Most of these incidents are preventable with proper planning, equipment, and training.

300+

Fatal falls per year
in construction

6 ft

Height that requires
fall protection

100%

Falls are
preventable

3 Methods of Fall Protection

Every worker above 6 feet must be protected by one of these systems:

1

GUARDRAILS

Physical barriers at least 42 inches high along open edges. The preferred method — no worker action needed.

2

SAFETY NETS

Installed below working surfaces to catch falling workers. Must be tested and inspected regularly.

3

PERSONAL FALL ARREST

Harness + lanyard + anchor point rated for 5,000 lbs. Worker must be trained on proper use.

Before You Start — Quick Checklist

- Has a fall protection plan been created for this job?
- Is proper fall protection equipment available and inspected?
- Have all workers been trained on the equipment they will use?
- Are guardrails installed on all open edges above 6 feet?
- Are anchor points identified and rated for 5,000 lbs?
- Is a rescue plan in place if someone falls?

Harness Inspection — Before Every Use

- Webbing:** Check all straps for cuts, burns, fraying, or chemical damage. Pull on each strap firmly.
- Buckles:** Ensure all buckles click securely and are not bent, cracked, or corroded.
- D-Rings:** Inspect dorsal D-ring for cracks, bends, or excessive wear. It must move freely.
- Stitching:** Look for broken, pulled, or cut stitching, especially at connection points.
- Labels:** Verify the inspection label is legible. Remove from service if expired or label is missing.
- Lanyard:** Check shock absorber indicator. If deployed (stretched), replace immediately.

Common Mistakes That Kill

- X Not tying off "because it's just a quick job" — most falls happen in under a minute
- X Connecting lanyard to something not rated as an anchor (pipes, conduit, rebar)
- X Using damaged equipment — always inspect BEFORE putting on your harness
- X Not accounting for fall distance — you need enough clearance below you to stop
- X No rescue plan — suspension trauma can be fatal within 30 minutes of a fall

Safety Tips to Remember

- V Plan your work — identify fall hazards BEFORE starting any task
- V 100% tie-off — stay connected at all times when above 6 feet
- V Inspect daily — check your harness, lanyard, and anchor every single time
- V Know your clearance — calculate total fall distance including deceleration
- V Speak up — if you see unsafe conditions, stop work and report immediately

Discussion Questions for Your Team

1. What fall hazards exist on our current job site?
2. What fall protection methods are we using today?
3. When was the last time you inspected your harness?
4. What would you do if you noticed damaged fall protection equipment?
5. Do we have a rescue plan in place? Does everyone know it?

TOOLBOX TALK SIGN-OFF

Date: _____ Supervisor: _____

Project: _____ Location: _____

Attendance sheet attached: [] Yes