Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Fall Protection Equipment

May 3-7, 2021

Who Needs Fall Protection Equipment?

If you said employees who are building bridges, working on roofs, or concrete forms you would be right. But what about workers who work at lesser heights... just a few feet off the ground? Consider those workers who work 3 ft. or more above the nearest surface of water; above a surface or thing that could cause injury; above an open pit, tank, or vat containing hazardous material. Those workers may be equally at risk as a worker on a roof top due to the existence of a risk like bodies of water, saws, ovens, or open vats of caustic chemicals at the lower level.

Types of Fall Protection Equipment

There are several types of fall protection equipment including: fall arrest, travel restraints and guardrails. It is important to understand the difference between a fall arrest system and travel restraint system. A fall arrest system consists of a full body harness and a lanyard with a shock absorber. The fall arrest equipment may be attached directly to an anchorage or connected to an anchored lifeline. Where guardrails have not been provided, a restraint system may be used to restrict a worker's travel distance and prevent them from getting too close to a roof edge or other hazard. Travel restraint equipment is comprised of an anchored lifeline or lanyard that attaches to the worker's harness. Guardrails are commonly used on construction sites, as they are a convenient means of protecting workers. Guardrails protect roof openings and the roof edge. Guardrails must be attached to the edge or as close to the open edge as possible. If rails must be removed for material handling, fall protection equipment must be worn by the exposed worker(s).

Fall Protection Inspections

- Thoroughly inspect all nylon webbing for frayed edges, broken fibers, burn marks, deterioration, or other visible signs of damage. Stitching should be intact and not torn or loose.
- Check to see that buckles and D-rings are not distorted or damaged. Look closely at all components for stress cracks, deformity, gouging, corrosion, and sharp edges. Inspect connection points where the buckle or D-ring is attached to the harness. Ensure that no stitching is pulled and that the buckle or D-ring is securely attached.
- Inspect all rivets and grommets to be certain they are not deformed and are securely fastened to the harness and cannot be pulled loose.
- If using a shock absorber type of lanyard, look for the warning tag which indicates that the lanyard has been exposed to a fall. - Snap hooks and eyes should not be distorted or bent. Inspect them for cracks, sharp edges, gouges, or corrosion. Check to be sure the locking mechanism is operating properly and that there is no binding of the mechanism.
- > Test the locking mechanism by pulling sharply on the cable end to be sure it locks immediately and firmly.
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SAFETY REMINDER: You cannot enjoy wealth if you do not have health. The greatest wealth is health.

Discussion Points/Quiz :

- 1. Demonstrate a harness and lanyard inspection for the meeting attendees.
- 2. What type of fall protection systems does this jobsite contain and use?