

MAJOR PROGRAM POINTS

"FALL PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE"

Part of the "GENERAL SAFETY SERIES"

Quality Safety and Health Products, for Today...and Tomorrow

Outline of Major Points Covered in the "Fall Protection" Course

The following outline summarizes the major points of information presented in the Course on Fall Protection. The outline can be used to survey the Course before taking it on a computer, as well as to review the Course when a computer is not available.

- **Some of the areas where fall prevention is critical include:**
 - Climbing ladders.
 - Working on scaffolds.
 - Other "off the ground" environments.

- **Each year falls "on the job" take a devastating toll.**
 - Over 11,000 deaths.
 - More than 200,000 disabling injuries.

- **When working off the ground the right "mindset" is essential for proper safety.**
 - Safety must be first and foremost in your thoughts.
 - Remember to scan work areas for potential hazards.

- **When working on Ladders:**
 - Inspect the rungs before climbing.
 - Use the "three-point climb".
 - Face the front of the ladder.
 - Keep your hands on the side rails.
 - Keep your weight centered between the rails.

- **Working in lift buckets or other portable platforms requires extra protection.**
 - Always secure yourself with a "tie-off."

- **Workers are more vulnerable when they are "on the move" above the ground.**
 - Always watch your step.
 - Be aware of any trip hazards (remove them if possible.)
 - Look for posted warning signs.
 - Obey restrictions regarding authorized and protected areas.

- **Never work above ground in severe weather, such as:**
 - Wind.
 - Rain.

- **If you are not feeling "100 percent", weakness or slow reflexes could cause real problems. Don't work above ground if you are:**
 - Under the influence of alcohol.
 - Taking certain medications.
 - Sick.

- **Some people have a fear of heights.**
 - Don't force them to work above their comfort level.
 - It could endanger everyone's safety.

- **The goal of a Fall Protection Plan is to eliminate the possibility of dangerous falls.**
 - The Plan shows which work areas present hazards.
 - At most facilities, precautions must begin at four feet above the ground.
 - In the construction industry, precautions must begin at six feet off the ground.

- **Complete fall protection must include at least one of the following components:**
 - Guard Rails.
 - Safety Nets.
 - Personal Fall Arrest Systems.

- **Installing a guard rail is an effective fall prevention system.**
 - Rails can be temporary or permanent.
 - Some are fitted with screens and "toe boards."

- **Rails must:**
 - Be able to support 200 pounds.
 - Stand 39 - 45 inches above the walking surfaces.
 - Include a mid-rail.
 - Be inspected during regular intervals.

- **When guard rails can not be installed, "Safety Nets" are often employed.**
 - These are commonly used on construction sites.
 - "Personnel Nets" are designed to catch falling workers.
 - "Debris Nets" are designed with a tighter mesh, to catch falling tools.

- **Inspect safety nets periodically to ensure that they remain in good condition.**
 - A minimum look at them every week.
 - They should also be inspected after anything lands in the net.
 - Tools and other materials that end up in the net should be removed quickly.

- **If the potential for falls cannot be designed out of a worksite, then "Personal Fall Arrest Systems" should be used.**

- **Personal Fall Arrest Systems are comprised of three components which work together.**
 - A "Full Body Harness."
 - A "Connecting Device."
 - An "Anchor Point."

- **Before you use it, test and closely inspect all fall prevention equipment to:**
 - Experience how the equipment works.
 - Make any necessary adjustments.
 - Become comfortable and familiar with the system.

- **A full body harness provides the most support, and distributes weight evenly over three important areas of the body... the:**
 - Shoulders.
 - Buttocks.
 - Thighs.

- **For a proper fit of a full body harness:**
 - Hold the back D-ring and shake it until the straps fall into place.
 - Slip the straps over the shoulders so the D-ring is in the middle of the upper back.
 - Buckle the waist strap.
 - Connect the leg straps by pulling the buckles between the legs and securing them to the other ends of the straps.
 - Firmly and securely tighten all buckles (but not so tight as to restrict movement).

- **Once your harness has been fitted, your next step is to hook it up to a connecting device.**
 - This links you to the anchor point.
 - The most common types of connecting devices are "Lanyards" and "Retracting Lifelines."

- **Lanyards are short ropes or straps which:**
 - Limit your possible falling distance.
 - Are available with shock absorbers if they are over two feet long.
 - Are fitted with snaphooks.

- **Self-retracting lifelines have a drum-wound line allowing a wider range of movement.**
 - A braking mechanism inside the casing quickly stops a fall.
 - They lifelines are also fitted with snaphooks, which must be securely locked into place.

- **When your job requires some mobility, a "Fixed Lifeline" should be used. There are two types:**
 - Horizontal.
 - Vertical.

- **"Horizontal Lifelines" stretch across a work surface from one point to another.**
- **"Vertical Lifelines" hang from an independent anchor point.**
 - This allows you to safely climb ladders.
 - Connection devices used with these lifelines must be equipped with a locking mechanism (they grab the lifeline during a fall).
- **"Bosun's Chairs" are often used with vertical lifelines.**
 - They are used when someone is working off the side of a structure.
 - Two independent lifelines are needed (one for the chair, one for you).
- **Retracting lifelines require special caution.**
 - Getting more than four feet away from the anchor point risks a "Swing Fall" (swinging back toward the anchor point).
- **With any lifeline, anchor points must always be secure.**
 - During a fall your body weight creates significant force.
 - Anchor points should support 5,000 pounds per person.
 - Fixtures such as pipes and electrical conduits should not be used.
- **Inspect fall protection equipment before work is begun.**
 - Look for frayed or broken harness straps.
 - Ensure that the D-ring is securely attached, and not bent out of shape.
 - Inspect for tears or missing stitches on harnesses.

*** * * SUMMARY * * ***

- **Avoiding off-the-ground accidents is easy with proper precautions.**
- **Follow all safe work practices.**
- **Climb ladders carefully.**
- **Inspect equipment frequently.**
- **Use the proper fall protection equipment.**
- **Hook up equipment carefully (then test it).**
- **Follow your facility's Fall Prevention Plan.**