THE ABCS OF FALL ARREST PROTECTION

TOOLBOX SAFETY TALK

LIST SOME JOB TASKS THAT REQUIRE WORKERS TO PERFORM ABOVE GROUND.

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EXPLAIN THE DANGER

From 2012 to 2017 there were 334 fall from heights in workplaces in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

With the different forms of fall protection, it is important to ensure workers use the equipment that is right for the job they are doing.

Poorly fitted, maintained, damaged, or missing equipment will not help a worker when they need it the most. It is important to inspect fall protection equipment before each use.

FALL RESTRAINT AND FALL ARREST

The fall restraint system includes harnesses and lanyards for the worker, or physical barriers such as guardrails to prevent the worker from falling.

The fall arrest system is in place to protect the worker after they have fallen, by preventing them from hitting the surface. It can include safety nets, harnesses, and lifelines.

ABCS OF FALL ARREST PROTECTION

Used Fall Arrest Protection only when other types of fall protection cannot be used, Fall arrest:

- Tethers a worker to an anchor point;
- Protects workers climbing vertical distances; and
- Protects workers on horizontal surfaces high above the ground.

Fall Arrest systems consists of several components:

Anchorage – A point of connection that is capable of supporting at least 22.5 kN per user that is attached to it.

Body Wear – A full body harness. This is the only body wear that can be used.

Lanyard – Is as short as work conditions permit, maybe equipped with a shock absorber, and is equipped with suitable snap hooks.

Connecting Linkage – Connection between the harness and the anchor. If the connecting Linkage allows more than 1.2 metres of free fall, a shock absorber must be included. Connectors include lanyards, snap hooks, and D rings.

Deceleration Device – A component included with shock absorbing lanyards that act as an energy absorption device limiting the force applied to the user during a fall. The shock absorption only works if the device is properly installed and the correct harness is worn by the user.

CONTROLS

Workers and employers can ensure the efficiency of fall protection equipment by:

- Wearing the right equipment for the height of the job;
- Ensuring training for workers conducting off ground tasks;
- Conducting regular inspections of equipment prior to each use; and
- If a fall occurs, not using the equipment again until it has been approved for future use by the manufacturer or a qualified individual.
- Ensure you have a fall protection rescue plan.

TRAINING AND INSPECTION

An employer must ensure that all workers are trained in the use of Personal Fall Arrest and Restraint Systems. All Personal Fall Arrest and Restraint Systems must be maintained and inspected in accordance with manufacturer's directions.

DEMONSTRATE

Discuss potential risks and injuries that would occur with a worker falling 100 feet wearing a fall restraint belt instead of a harness.

Adapted with permission from WorkSafeBC:
An Introduction to Personal Fall Protection Equipment.