



FALL PREVENTION ALLIANCE TOOLBOX TALK ON WHEN DO I NEED TO BE PROTECTED AND WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS

Company: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

General:

- Falls continue to be the major cause of fatalities in the work place;
- Fall Protection is required any time work is performed six feet or more above the ground;
- Most workers are exposed to all kinds of potential falls and don't realize it;
- Three most common systems for prevention of fall protection are; guardrails, safety net systems, and personal fall arrest systems.

Fall Protection Systems:

- A typical guard rail is usually constructed out of lumber and consists of a top rail, a mid rail and a toe board. These are attached to vertical posts that are spaced no more than 8 feet apart. The height of the top rail is 42 inches (plus or minus 3 inches) and the mid rail is installed 21 inches. The toe board is placed at floor level to prevent tools and materials from falling over the edge. The top rail must withstand 200 lbs. of a impact force and the mid rail must withstand a 150 lbs. of impact.
- The second type of fall protection is a safety net system. Nets must be installed as close as possible below the surface where workers are exposed to a fall, but no more than 30 feet below that work surface. Mesh openings cannot be longer than 6 inches on any side and the distance between the centers of adjacent openings cannot be greater than 6 inches. A safety net system must be able to catch a 400 lb. sand bag. Every net system must be inspected once a week. Additional requirements can be found in 29 CFR 1926.502(c).
- The third type of fall protection is personal fall arrest system (PFAS). A personal fall arrest system consists of some combination of an anchorage, connectors, a lanyard, a deceleration device, a lifeline, and a full body harness. Each of these components must have a tensile strength of at least 5000 lbs. to meet OSHA regulations. Remember to inspect your personal fall arrest system components before and after each use.

Most construction work can be accomplished safely using guardrail systems; however, there are times when safety net systems, personal fall arrest systems or other fall protection systems are required or are more appropriate. If you have any fall protection questions check with your supervisor or subpart M of the OSHA regulation starting at 29 CFR 1926.500. It is important for every worker to understand the basics of fall protection and to practice good fall prevention.

Remember, body belts cannot be used to arrest falls.

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Through the OSHA and Houston Fall Prevention Alliance, this Toolbox Talk was developed for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. July 2016.

The Houston Fall Prevention Alliance was formed by the below organizations to provide their members, and others, with information, guidance and access to training resources that will help them protect the health and safety of workers, particularly by reducing and preventing exposure to fall hazards in the construction industries and addressing fall related issues and understand the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act). In developing this alliance, these organizations recognize that OSHA's State Plan and On-site Consultation Project partners are an integral part of the OSHA national effort.





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