**OSHA** reports that falls are the leading cause of deaths in the construction industry. Help keep your employees safe by reviewing when and how to use fall protection equipment at your workplace in accordance with OSHA's safety standards.

**In your training session:**

1. **Ask your employees what fall protection equipment is.** What are the different kinds and what do they do? Are they fall arrest or fall restraint – and what is the difference? For the OSHA standards on fall arrest and restraint equipment, [click here](#).

2. **Ask your employees to identify specific work situations when fall protection is necessary.** OSHA requires that workers use fall protection when working at a height of 6 feet or above dangerous equipment regardless of height.

3. **Explain any company specific policies on when certain kinds of fall protection equipment must be used.** Address any particularities about that equipment, including any concerns you have with how it has not been used safely in the past and any confusing points about set-up or use.

4. **Ask if your employees have any questions.** If not, quiz them on fall protection concepts. Sample question: A personal fall arrest system consists of:
   (a) An anchorage and a body belt
   (b) An anchorage, lanyard and connectors, and a body belt
   (c) An anchorage, lanyard and connectors, and a full body harness
   (d) A well fitted harness

5. **For a practical review of fall protection equipment, see OSHA’s Fall Protection e-Tool in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).**

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**VOCABULARY**

- **Anchorage points** – Puntos de anclaje
- **Body belt** – Cinturón de seguridad del cuerpo
- **Fall arrest** – Detención de caídas
- **Fall restraint** – Restricción de caídas
- **Guardrail system** – Sistema de barandas
- **Harness** – Arnés de seguridad
- **Hole cover** – Cubierta protectora de huecos
- **Lifeline** – Línea de vida
- **Safety net** – Red de seguridad

**USEFUL EXPRESSION**

- **Work above 6 feet** – Trabajo a más de seis pies de altura

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**HARNESS SAFETY**

Many fall injuries occur not only from not wearing a safety harness, but from using it incorrectly. Many people do not realize, for instance, that personal fall arrest systems (PFAS) with a lanyard connecting device deliberately allow their wearers to fall a long distance before they completely arrest the fall. A PFAS with a lanyard connecting device is only effective at a height of about 18.5 feet or greater. For work performed between 6 and 18.5 feet in the air, you must use alternative fall protection devices, such as self-retracting lifelines.

**In your training session:**

1. Ask your employees to name specific tasks that require them to wear harnesses.
2. Demonstrate how to put on and properly secure a harness. Allow time for questions.
3. Explain the risks of misuse:
   - If used too low to the ground (less than 18.5 feet), the lanyard/harness system may not arrest the fall soon enough before the victim reaches the ground.
   - If improperly secured, the harness system may not restrain the falling worker.
   - If improperly secured, the harness system may cut off blood circulation.
   - If the harnessed worker does not adjust the anchorage points in order to remain approximately perpendicular to them, the worker risks experiencing a swing fall and compromising the ability of a PFAS system to engage and arrest the fall.
4. Ask your employees to name conditions in which a lanyard/harness system should NOT be used:
   - When working at a height less than 18.5 feet above the next lowest level
   - If the harness:
     - has frayed or worn webbing
     - has buckles that are bent, cracked or nicked
     - has a damaged D-ring
     - will not support the worker's weight (check the manufacturer's label)
5. Distribute the Center for Construction Research & Training's free Fall Protection Harness Hazard Alert to your employees to ensure that they understand how and when to use body harness systems. Available in **English** & **Spanish**

If you have Spanish-speaking employees but cannot speak Spanish yourself, consider using a bilingual employee to interpret if he/she is comfortable with that, or even having that person lead a separate discussion if he/she is capable. Regardless of the translation mode, it is important to determine that the employee is literate in his/her native language if written materials are used.

**VOCABULARY**

- **Anchorage points** – Puntos de anclaje
- **Fall protection** – Protección contra caídas
- **Harness** – Arnés de seguridad
- **Height** – Altura
- **Lanyard** – Cordón del arnés de seguridad
- **Self-retracting lifeline** – Línea de vida autoretráctil

**USEFUL EXPRESSIONS**

At a height above 18.5 feet – A una altura por encima de dieciocho punto cinco pies

It’s important (to use)... – Es importante (usar)...

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Before your employees even begin work on a scaffold, ensure that they are prepared to recognize and report all unsafe scaffolding conditions. Train them to protect themselves further by adopting all necessary fall protection measures each time they access a scaffold.

Show the Chesapeake Employers' Wumbus Safety Flick covering “The Proper Inspection and Use of Scaffolds” (14 minutes), available to Chesapeake Employers’ policyholders with an E-Services account. Click here to set up a free account. The video is also available in Spanish on YouTube.

Discuss the following questions. If practical, require each of your employees to answer at least once.

What signs should you look for before using a scaffold?
- Guardrail system and toe boards
- No overlap or gaps between planks
- Maximum 14” gap between scaffold platform and building surface except under special circumstances
- Legal safe distance from power lines/electrical hazards
- Work platform strong enough to withstand weight of employee(s) and working materials
- Scaffolding system “tied into” building when and where required
- Framing and scaffolding members connected by correct bracing
- Secure base on firm, level ground or other approved stable material

What kind of personal protective equipment must be worn on a scaffold? When?
A personal fall arrest system or guardrail system that meet OSHA requirements should be used on a scaffold at a height above 10 feet.

How should power tools or cords be used safely on a scaffold?
- With GFCIs (ground-fault circuit interrupters)
- With an AEGCP (assured equipment grounding conductor program)

How should you access a scaffold?
See OSHA’s “Scaffold Access” page in English and Spanish.

Who is authorized to erect and approve scaffolds?
A competent person (See OSHA’s definition.)

What is the procedure for relocating mobile scaffolds?
- Have all workers exit the scaffold before attempting to move it.
- Double check that all wheels are locked and/or that the base is secure before resuming work on the scaffold.
- Ensure that no unsecured objects are left on the scaffold before moving it.

Distribute Chesapeake Employers’ “Scaffolding Safety and Fall Protection” tip sheet to your employees. Available in English and Spanish.
Slips and trips can cause minor injuries as well as sprains and fractures that mean lost work days and drops in productivity.

In your training session:

1. Ask your employees to identify hazards of which they should be aware when walking.
   - The risks of wearing inappropriate footwear for the job
   - Ground trip hazards: Go over housekeeping procedures at your workplace, such as:
     - Stacking materials neatly and to a reasonable height
     - Keeping cords out of walkways
     - Placing tools and other objects in designated areas when they are not in use
     - Marking and cleaning spills
     - Keeping stairways and walkways clear
   - Mobile equipment
   - Overhead work (falling objects)
   - Increased risk of tripping when lifting and handling objects
   - Uneven walking surfaces, especially outside
   - Slippery surfaces and inclement weather: Workers should shorten their stride in these situations.

2. Distribute Chesapeake Employers’ “Slips, Trips and Falls” tip sheet to your employees. Available in English and Spanish.

3. Consider having all employees sign a safety training agreement consenting to follow the fall prevention guidelines covered by this fall protection training series. See the example, attached.

VOCABULARY

Non-slip shoes – Zapatos antideslizantes [sah-PAH-tohs ahn-tee-dace-lee-SAHN-tace]
Slippery – Resbaladizo [race-bah-lah-DEE-soh]
Walk – Caminar [kah-mee-NAR]

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Good housekeeping practices – Buenas prácticas de orden y limpieza [BWAY-nahs PRAHK-tee-kahs day OR-dain ee leem-PAH-yah-sah]
Keep the work space clean – Mantenga limpio el espacio de trabajo [mahn-TAIN-gah LEEM-pyoh ell ace-PAH-syoh day trah-BAH-hoh]

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(Name of Company) considers the safety of its employees to be its first priority. We do all in our power to reduce the risk of accidents for our employees, especially in preventing falls, which are responsible for some of the most severe workplace injuries in the construction industry. Upon completion of a fall prevention training, we require all of our employees to agree to follow certain safety rules to protect themselves and their co-workers from unnecessary risks.

Please read and initial the following statements to indicate that you understand and agree.

I will use the necessary fall protection equipment provided to me by my supervisor when:

- I am on any elevated, unguarded surface or roof at a height of 6 feet or more, or 10 feet or more on a scaffold.
- I am above dangerous equipment or machinery regardless of the height.

Damaged or ineffective fall protection equipment procedure:

- I will inform my supervisor of any damaged fall protection equipment.
- I will not use any damaged fall protection equipment.
- I will inform my supervisor if I suspect that a faulty fall prevention or guardrail setup exists.

I will only climb a scaffold:

- after checking for nearby power lines and/or electrical hazards.
- when an approved fall protection barrier (i.e., guardrails and toe boards) is in place.
- if the base is on secure level ground or an approved, stable surface.
- using approved entry points (such as ladders); I will not climb the cross-bracing.

I will observe all company housekeeping policies, including:

- stacking materials neatly and not to an excessive, potentially unstable height
- putting away tools that are not in use
- keeping cords out of walkways
- marking and cleaning up spills
- keeping stairways and ramps clear

I, ____________________________ (Employee Name), understand and agree to follow the aforementioned safety rules related to fall-prevention. I understand that repeated violations of any of these safety rules may affect my position here at the company, up to and including termination of employment.

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Signature: ____________________________
(Nombre de la empresa) considera la seguridad de sus empleados como algo de primera importancia. Hacemos todo al nuestro alcance para disminuir el riesgo de accidentes, especialmente respecto a las caídas, que resultan en algunas de las heridas más severas en toda la industria de construcción. Tras cumplir una sesión de capacitación sobre cómo prevenir las caídas, todos los empleados tienen que firmar un acuerdo en el cual aceptan unas condiciones de mantenerse a salvo durante actividades peligrosas.

Lea y firme cada de las siguientes frases si entiende y se decide a seguirlas.

Usaré todo el equipo de protección contra caídas necesario que me provee mi supervisor cuando:

- Estoy en una superficie elevada o un techo a una altura de 6 pies o más, o 10 pies o más en un andamio.
- Trabajo encima de maquinaria o equipo peligrosos (no importa la altura).

Política sobre el equipo de protección contra caídas dañado o inseguro:

- Informaré a mi supervisor si algún equipo está dañado.
- No usaré equipo de protección contra caídas que está dañado.
- Informaré a mi supervisor si sospecho que un sistema de prevención de caídas o de barandillas sea defectuoso.

Me subo al andamio solamente si:

- después de notar la presencia de líneas eléctricas y otros peligros eléctricos.
- cuando hay una barrera para la protección contra caídas aprobada para los andamios (como guardarriales y tablones de capellada).
- si la base se sitúa en terreno plano u otra superficie estable y aprobada.
- usando puntos de acceso aprobados (como escaleras), no a través del reforzamiento transversal.

Seguiré todas las normas de la empresa con respecto al bien mantenimiento del sitio de trabajo, incluyendo:

- Apilaré todos los materiales de una manera arreglada, a una altura estable.
- Guardaré todas las herramientas que no estén en uso.
- Posicionaré los cordones en un lugar alejado de la pasarela.
- Señalaré y limpiaré las líquidas derramadas sin demora.
- Mantendré despejadas las escaleras y las rampas.

Yo, ____________________________________ (Nombre de empleado) entiendo y acepto las antedichas reglas de la prevención de caídas. Entiendo que una violación de cualquiera de estas reglas puede acarrear acciones disciplinarias, incluyendo la terminación del contrato laboral.

Nombre: __________________________________________ Fecha: ___________________________

Firma: ___________________________________________