



Lewis Energy Group

Safety Alert – Fall Protection

From the LEG HSE Department

Why is fall protection important?

Falls are among the most common causes of serious work related injuries and deaths. Just considering ladder falls, every year over **500,000 injuries** are treated with **300 resulting in death!** Employers must take measures in their workplaces to prevent employees from falling off overhead platforms, elevated workstations or into holes in the floor and walls.

Unsafe Acts and Conditions:

- Poor housekeeping – slip/trip/fall hazards.
- Walking surfaces with grease, mud, ice, snow, wet.
- Walking with hands in pockets.
- Poorly lighted stairs and walkways.
- Holes in walking surfaces – between 1” to 12”.
- Floor Openings – 12” or more, through which a person could fall.
- Working too close to an excavation or open edge/sides of platforms.
- Misuse of ladders.
- Using the wrong ladder.
- Failure to use “three point” contact while climbing on/off or in/out of work equipment.
- Platforms/catwalks missing handrails.
- Handrails loose.
- Failure to use handrails while ascending/descending stairs.
- Debris, cords, hoses on stairs/walkways.
- Uneven surfaces.
- Failure to use or improper use of fall protection when above 4 feet.
- Improper anchor point for tie-off.

Preventative Actions:

- Guard every floor hole into which a worker can accidentally walk by use of a railing and toe board or a floor hole cover. Stay alert to open edges, excavations, floor openings, etc
- Provide a guardrail and toe board around every open-sided platform, floor or runway that is 4 feet or higher off the ground or next level.
- Other means of fall protection that may be required on certain jobs include safety harness and line, safety nets, stair railings and handrails.
- Good Housekeeping – pick up loose debris, cords, hoses, etc.
- Good light placement.
- Do not walk with hands in your pocket when working surface is greasy, muddy, icy, wet or otherwise slippery.
- Proper ladder selection and proper securement.
- Use “three point” contact when climbing on/off or in/out of equipment.
- Use handrail(s) while using stairs.
- Proper selection of tie-off (anchor point).
- Wear/utilize fall protection system – anytime above 4 feet, or if there are dangerous conditions underneath you

To stop a fatal fall ...



PHOTO COURTESY OF ED REHFELD, LEGET

1 Wear a full-body harness

A proper fall protection harness has straps worn around the trunk and thighs. If you fall, it will distribute “stopping force” across your thighs, pelvis, chest and shoulders to prevent severe injury.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MILLER FALL PROTECTION

2 Inspect your harness It must be worn properly and be in good condition

- Inspect your harness for worn or damaged straps, buckles, D-ring and lines.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when you put on your harness.
- Make sure all straps are fastened and adjusted correctly.
- **Don't start work** until you are satisfied with the condition and fit of your fall protection harness.



PHOTO COURTESY CAPITAL SAFETY

3 Make sure you are connected

Your lanyard should be attached to the D-ring on your fall arrest harness, then **anchored securely** to an anchor point. Ask your supervisor if your anchor point can sustain the load without failure. **Guardrails are not anchor points.**