



SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK

FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



Company _____ Date _____

To encourage all of us to promote safety on a continuing basis, the Builders Exchange publishes a safety tip in each issue of the weekly **Bulletin**. The superintendent/foreman of each job should use this safety tip in a short safety meeting Monday morning. We suggest that this 5-to-10 minute meeting be just before lunch or perhaps right after the morning break. You can then emphasize the SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK all week long.

10 Tips for Working at Heights (Part 1 of 2)

Week Ending 01/04/19

Whether you work at high elevations every day or just once in a while, your safety focus during those times is of utmost importance. It takes one mistake to turn a routine work task into a fatality. You must be prepared to protect your employees each and every time they could be exposed.

1. Use Railing

When you can, use railing. Passive protection is the easiest way to keep your workers safe in order to achieve compliance because there is nothing that they need to actually do to keep themselves safe (other than stay within the rails). There are railing system for almost every style of rooftop like non-penetrating railing for flat or low-slope roofs, parapet mounted railing, metal roof railing, and more. Pre-fabricated railings can be permanently affixed or portable to suit your needs.

2. Select the Proper PPE

If you're going to use Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS), you need to ensure you're choosing the proper equipment. All full-body harnesses that meet ANSI standards will perform the same, despite their cost, however, that price differential is getting you something. Sure, sometimes it's just a name, but other times, it's functionality that you're getting or sacrificing, such as extra D-rings, fireproof material or arc-safe design. Sometimes, a more expensive harness is more expensive simply because it's been made to be more comfortable. Do your research and decide what you really need. If you have workers welding at heights, then a standard nylon harness is probably not going to be what you need. Perhaps Kevlar is the way to go. And, don't forget your workforce. Perhaps comfort isn't your main concern, but that's not the only consideration you need to make. Harnesses are not one-size-fits-all. Make sure your workers can properly adjust their harnesses so that they fit correctly. Lanyards need to be properly selected as well. Depending on the height at which you are working, a 6' lanyard with a deceleration device will not protect your worker. Instead, a retractable lanyard may be necessary.

3. Inspect Your PPE

Employees can use all the equipment they want, if they're not inspecting it, it could fail anytime. When it comes to harnesses and lanyards, while they need to be periodically inspected by a Competent Person (one with the knowledge to recognize the hazard AND the authority to correct it), they should also be inspected by the user prior to every use. In order for this to happen, your users need to understand what they're looking for, what is acceptable and what is not, and what to do when they find a

problem. The inspection should be thorough but does not need to take a lot of time.

4. Ensure You Understand Fall Distance

You can wear all the fall protection equipment in the world, but if it allows you to hit the lower level before it engages, it's pointless. It is not unusual to go onto a construction site or observe a maintenance crew in a plant and see a worker at 10-12' off the ground wearing a 6' lanyard with a deceleration device. While at first glance you might think that it should work, there are a number of reasons why it won't. First, you have to add 3.5' of distance to account for the deployment of your deceleration device. Already that means the lanyard itself is 9.5' long. Unless you are a 6'' tall person, this is some pretty bad news. Your actual fall distance needs not only include the length of your lanyard when deployed, but also your body length below the D-ring and any sag in your harness and anchor system. Count on a good 18.5' minimum before you're able to use a 6' lanyard with deceleration device.

5. Ensure the Selection of Acceptable Anchor Point

If you were to pick a construction site at random right now and see what they're using as anchor points, you might assume there were no rules. PVC pipe? Not an anchor. Decorative steel? Not an anchor. In fact, many more things will NOT be an acceptable anchor point than WILL be an acceptable anchor point. Why? Because the anchor point must support not only the weight of the person attached but 5000 lbs. per person attached (or a factor of 2 if you're having an engineer to determine your anchor). Many fixtures are not going to withstand those forces. Structural steel using a proper beam clamp? Sure. A manufactured roofing cart or other manufactured anchor? Sure, if installed properly. To see an example of a compliant, and easy to install anchor point take a look at the Weightanka deadweight anchor. Short of that, you're going to need some documentation and/or an engineer's approval to use something as an anchor point.

Sign up for our Fall Protection Competent Person Training
January 22, 2019 - 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Visit www.bceva.com/events for details and to register

Special Topics for this Job: _____

MSDS # _____ Reviewed – Title: _____

Present at Meeting:		
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Supervisor's Signature: _____

Note: These SAFETY TIPS OF THE WEEK are to help members provide a safe workplace and to instruct employees in ways to prevent accidents. Ensure you record the names of those who attend your safety meetings, and file this form with your permanent accident prevention records.