Tool Box Talk

Fall Protection Anchor Systems

What are Fall Protection Anchors?

Anchors are a component or subsystem of a fall protection system used to connect other parts of a fall protection system to an anchorage—a secure connection point—and includes an anchorage connector. There are three basic types of anchor systems for fall protection:

Designed Fixed Support—load-rated anchors specifically designed and permanently installed for fall protection purposes as an integral part of the building or structure (ex. Roof anchors on high-rise buildings). Designed fixed support can be used to anchor a fall-arrest system, fall-restricting system, or travel-restraint system, if the support has been installed according to the building codes and regulations and is safe and practical to use.

Temporary Fixed Support—anchor systems designed to be connected to the structure using specific installation instructions (ex. Nail-on anchors used by shinglers).

Existing Structural Features or Equipment —not intended as anchor points, but verified by a professional engineer or competent person as having adequate capacity to serve as anchor points (ex. Roof top mechanical rooms, structural steel, or reinforced concrete columns)

Safety Tips

Never anchor to roof vents, roof hatches, small pipes and ducts, metal chimneys, TV antennas, stair/balcony railings, or fixed-access ladders.

When existing structural features or equipment are used as anchor points, avoid corners or edges that could cut, chafe, or abrade fall protection components.

Where necessary, use softeners such as wood blocking to protect connecting devices, lifelines, or lanyards from damage.

Legislation Requirements

According to Section 9-5 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020: if a worker uses a personal fall arrest system or a travel restraint system, an employer, contractor, owner, or supplier shall ensure: anchor points to which the personal fall arrest system is attached have an ultimate load capacity of at least 22.2 kilonewtons (5000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied.

Temporary anchor points have an ultimate load capacity of 3.5 kilonewtons (800 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied and is installed/used according to manufacturer's specifications; is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only; is removed by the last worker from use on the earlier of the date the work project for which it is intended is completed; and the time specified by the manufacturer

Permanent anchor points have an ultimate load capacity of at least 8.75kN (2 000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied; is installed and used according to manufacturer's specifications; and is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only

For more information or for advice on specific applications, see your local fall protection supplier.

SCSA Guide to OHS Legislation App

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When accidents and incidents happen on the jobsite, we are always quick to point the finger at lack of training, not following practices or procedures, or even improper supervision. The idea that the hazards and dangers associated with the job were not properly communicated to all of the workers is often missed.

Tool Box Talks can go by many names, and although formats may vary, these meetings all serve one purpose: to inform employees and contract workers. Tool Box Talks are short, informal, meetings between management and the workers on a jobsite. The goal of these meetings is to reinforce current safe job procedures, inform workers of new and/or relevant procedures, review recent safety violations/incidents, and ensure workers are up-to-date on the information required to complete their work safely.

Always use a Tool Box Talk form to record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance, and any follow-up actions to be taken. Not only do these forms help with consistency of record keeping, but they also ensure that nothing is missed. At the end of the meeting have management sign off on the form.

One of the most important aspects of a Tool Box Talk is giving workers an opportunity to voice their concerns and ask questions. All employees have a right to participate in health and safety as it relates to their work and it is the supervisor or manager's responsibility to create an environment for them to do so. Once the meeting is over, and the form is filled out, it should be filed with other documented Tool Box Talks.

Remember that Tool Box Talks are short and informal, they are not meant to be intimidating. Use the opportunity to have fun and stay on top of what is necessary to keep safety culture a strong part of the business.

For a full listing of Tool Box Talk topics, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/resources/tool-box-talks

For a copy of the Tool Box Talk form, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Tool_Box_Meeting.pdf

About the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) is an industry-funded, membership-based, nonprofit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees in the construction industry throughout the province to reduce the human and financial losses associated with injuries. Registered March 20, 1995, the SCSA is, and has been since inception, committed to injury prevention. Serving almost 10,000 member companies with business offices in both Regina and Saskatoon, the major business units of the association are Advisory Services, Business Development, Corporate Services, Program Services and Training. The mission of the SCSA is constructing safety leadership in Saskatchewan and the vision is to create the safest construction environment in Canada.