

**W**ho needs fall protection equipment? If you said workers building bridges or cleaning office tower windows, you would be right. But what about all the workers who work at lesser heights, just a few feet off the ground? They should also be protected from falls, which can be every bit as fatal.

Consider your work area. Are there locations from which some-one could fall? What sort of protection is in place to prevent a fall? And is there equipment to stop a fall?

Companies need to have a fall protection system when workers are working at a height of three meters (ten feet) or more or if there is a possibility of injury if a worker can fall at any height. Companies are mandated to have a fall protection plan in place as per section 116.1 of the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

### Fall Protection Types

There are several fall protection apparatus' available including fall arrest personal protective equipment, travel restraints and guardrails. Fall protection equipment must be labeled with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approval labels.

It is important to understand the difference between a fall arrest system and travel restraint system.



These are most commonly used in the construction industry, but may apply to many other situations where employees must work at heights.

### Fall Arrest System

All workers must wear fall arrest systems when they are in the danger of falling more than three meters (10 feet) or when working above operating machinery, fluids or hazardous substances and objects. A fall arrest system consists of a full body harness and a lanyard with a shock absorber. The fall arrest equipment may be attached directly to an adequate support or connected to an anchored lifeline.

### Travel Restraint / Limiting Systems

Where guardrails have not been provided, a restraint system may be used to restrict a worker's travel distance and prevents them from getting too close to the roof edge. Travel restraint safety equipment is comprised of an anchored lifeline that attaches to the worker's harness.

### Inspections

- Thoroughly inspect all nylon webbing for frayed edges, broken fibers, burn marks, deterioration or other visible signs of damage. Stitching should be intact and not torn or loose. The harness should be somewhat "soft" and flexible and not stiff from dirt or contaminants.
- Check to see that buckles and D-rings are not distorted or damaged. Look closely at all components for stress cracks, deformity, gouging, corrosion and sharp edges. Inspect connection points where the buckle or D-ring is attached to the harness. Insure that no stitching is pulled and that the buckle or D-ring is securely attached.
- Inspect all rivets and grommets to be certain they are not deformed, and are securely fastened to the harness and cannot be pulled loose.
- If using a shock absorber type of lanyard, look for the warning tag which indicates that the lanyard has been exposed to a fall.
- Snap hooks and eyes should not be distorted or bent. Inspect them for cracks, sharp edges, gouges or corrosion. Check to be sure the locking mechanism is operating properly and that there is no binding of the mechanism.
- Test the locking mechanism by pulling sharply on the cable end to be sure it locks immediately and firmly.

If you find any of these conditions during the inspection, do not use the equipment.

# Tool Box Talk

## How To Use This Resource

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](http://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](http://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, non-profit 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.*