

### What is an SRL?

A self-retracting lifeline (SRL) is a fall protection device designed to extend and retract with worker movements. The SRL is used while working at heights, with safety features to lock immediately in the event of a fall.

There are a variety of SRL options, so knowing the difference and understanding the hazards of the job will allow you to properly select your fall protection equipment. Always remember in Saskatchewan, you require a fall protection plan in accordance with 9-3 of *The Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*.

### Definitions

**Anchor point:** a secure connecting point capable of safely withstanding the impact forces applied by a fall protection system. Anchor points can be found in *The Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2020, 9-5*.

**D-Ring:** a D-shaped, forged metal attachment point for your fall protection equipment. It acts as a secure anchor point on full-body safety harnesses for connecting lanyards or lifelines to prevent falls.

### Class 1 SRL

Class 1 SRLs are typically designed for working on areas such as scaffolding, platforms and scissor lifts. The Class 1 SRL operates in the same way as a seatbelt would in your vehicle. It will allow you to have mobility to move around and work, but it will lock immediately if there is a sudden jerking motion, such as a fall.

The total free-fall distance is designed to be minimal (24 inches or less). The connection of a Class 1 is designed to be anchored at or above your dorsal D-Ring. As with any piece of equipment, an inspection should always be completed before use.

### Class 2 SRL

Class 2 SRLs are fall protection equipment specialized for working environments when an overhead anchor point is not available. This is not to say a Class 2 cannot be used in that fashion, but it is more commonly used around leading edges and foot-level tie-offs.

Class 2 SRLs are engineered and undergo testing to withstand being pulled over sharp edges. An additional

safety feature typically found is the external energy absorber. This is attached to the worker's end to help minimize impact forces during longer falls. Class 2 SRLs are rated for a free fall of up to 6 feet (1.8 m) over an edge.

### Class 1 vs. Class 2 Comparison

Feature	Class 1 SRL	Class 2 SRL
Overhead anchor	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Foot-level anchor	✗ No	✓ Yes
Leading-edge use	✗ No	✓ Yes
Fall clearance required	More	Less
Versatility	Limited	High

### Inspections

- Housing – no cracks, dents or damage
- Lifeline (cable or webbing) – no cuts, frays or burns
- Connector (snap hook/carabiner) – check closing/locking mechanism
- Retraction – line retracts smoothly
- Locking function – ensure a sharp pull engages the locking mechanism immediately
- Energy absorber indicator – no signs of deployment/impact
- Mounting point/anchor – secure and rated (typically 5,000 lbs/22 kN)

In addition, with a Class 2 SRL, be sure to include inspection of:

- Leading edge rating – clearly labelled Class 2
- Energy absorber pack – intact, designed for load
- Cable/webbing type and condition
- Connector strength – condition of the hooks and confirm ratings

### Key Takeaways

- Class 1 SRL – overhead anchorage only
- Class 2 SRL – overhead or low/foot-level anchorage

Choosing the correct SRL is required under the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Law and can prevent serious injury or death.