

TOOL BOX TALKS

Fall Arrest Connecting Devices

Connecting devices constitute one component of a three component fall arrest system. Connecting devices affix the employee (in a harness) to the anchorage point. There is a diverse selection of connecting devices. Review fall hazards and compare with connecting device options to create a great fall arrest system. Select a connecting device based on the work to be done and the work environment.

WORKSAFE TIPS



CONNECTING DEVICE SELECTION

- Shock-absorbing lanyard
- Tie-back lanyard
- Self-retracting lifelines
- Rope grabs and vertical lifelines
- Positioning and restraint lanyards

CONNECTING DEVICE BEST PRACTICES

- Select the lanyard (connecting device) that best protects the worker.
- Devices must limit free-fall to 6 feet or less.
- Always rig connecting devices so that in a fall, you avoid contact with the structures below.
- Allow an extra 3.5 feet in length of the connecting device, to account for the elasticity of the rope or web upon fall impact. (6 foot lanyard plus 3.5 stretch factor)
- Select a connecting device based on the work to be performed and the work environment.
- Not all connecting devices are the same.
- Electrical workers need an arc-flash resistant lanyard compliant with ASTM arc-flash standards.
- NEVER use connectors with single-action, non-locking snap hooks (pre-1998 manufacture)

CONNECTING DEVICE DO'S

- Provide training to users of fall arrest systems **BEFORE** they begin using it.
- Inspect connecting lanyards before use.
- Read user instructions.
- Use the **SHORTEST** lanyard possible.
- Use connecting lanyards that have double-locking snap hooks.
- Use connecting lanyards that have a deceleration device.
- Use **SHORT** connecting lanyards when working out of boom lifts.
- Store devices in clean, dry areas free of sunlight, oils, or welding splatter.
- Connect to anchorages above the d-ring of the employee's body harness.

CONNECTING DEVICE DON'TS

- Tie back (loop around) lanyards unless specifically designed for that purpose.
- Connect two lanyards together.
 - This increases free fall distance 9.5 additional feet!
 - The closing gate of the snap hook may not withstand the impact of a fall!
- Use older, non-locking snap hook connecting devices.
- Use lanyards to lift tools / equipment.
- Connect to anchorages **BELOW** the dorsal d-ring of the employee's harness.
 - Connecting to anchorages below the d-ring **INCREASE** fall distance
- Connecting to anchorages **ABOVE** the d-ring shorten fall distance.