

TOOL BOX TALKS

Horizontal Lifelines

In 2006, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that fatal work injuries involving falls increased 5 percent in 2006 after a sharp decrease in 2005. The 809 fatal falls in 2006 was the third highest total since 1992, when the fatality census began. Falls from ladders and roofs still account for the majority of falls. Identifying fall hazards and deciding how best to protect workers is the first step in reducing or eliminating fall hazards.

WORKSAFE TIPS

USING HORIZONTAL LIFELINES CORRECTLY:

- Use only ANSI/OSHA-compliant fall arrest systems.
- Read the directions before using fall protection devices.
- Inspect each lifeline component before use.
 - Check webbing and rope for damaged fibers, cuts, frayed edges, loose stitches.
 - Check hardware for distortions, cracks, bends, breaks, sharp edges, unusual wear.
 - Snap hooks and approved carabineers must function freely and lock properly.
 - A competent person must inspect components regularly as well.
- Slack limits the effectiveness of the lifeline.
- Lifelines are meant to PREVENT a fall - the slack should be out of the line at all times.
- The anchorage must be directly above the user to prevent a swinging fall.
- When using a horizontal lifeline, keep the rope slack out and the line tight against the harness.
- Too much slack means that the line will not prevent or stop a fall.
- Make sure the rope grab is assembled correctly. If done wrong, the rope grab will not snag the rope.
- Excess rope can cause a trip. Keep it out of the way.
- Provide a rescue plan for anyone using fall protection.
- Train regularly and whenever special hazards arise.

Rope grabs pinch and hold the rope when activated.



Anchorage must support 5,000 pounds.



Only use a shock-absorbing lanyard with horizontal lifelines.

