

TOPIC: Fall Protection – Inspecting & Donning Your Harness

ACKNOWLEDGE: Thank you for being here and participating in this safety talk. I know your time is valuable, so I will ensure every moment of this talk is worth your while (*make eye contact with the entire group*).

Training Tips:

Ask a lot of questions: While delivering your Safety Talk, ask questions that ‘hook the mind’ and engage your participants. The simple act of asking questions is a High Impact Training technique!

Raise a hand when asking questions: Directed to your audience, you’ll often find that people are more willing to answer your questions and become active participants... try it out! Also, pause for a moment after asking a question; waiting for and encouraging responses from the group.

Provide an example of a personal experience: (*or a recent news event*) For instance: “A close friend of mine once _____”, or “Just last week _____”. This is a very effective method to help participants relate to your topic. It often helps them to realize: ‘*Yeah, this could affect me. I should listen to this.*’

What’s In It For Me (WIIFM)?: I am here to deliver a brief safety talk on how to inspect your fully body harness prior to use, as well as how to correctly wear it. It’s incredibly important that all components of the harness are inspected before use, as its there to protect you in the event of a fall from heights. If a harness has any defect (wear and tear, corrosion, etc.), it will not be effective and the chances of you being severely injured, or even killed, if you fall from heights will increase immensely.

ASK: Can anyone tell me what the main functions of a full body harness are? (Wait for and encourage responses)

The functions of a harness are:

1. To hold a worker’s body during free fall, deceleration, and final arrest.
2. To keep a worker in an upright position while awaiting rescue.
3. To distribute and absorb the forces from a fall to minimize the chances of a serious injury.

ASK: Has anyone here ever fallen from a height, or recall a situation where a co-worker has fallen? What was the outcome? How do you think it could have been prevented? ((Wait for and encourage personal stories. Thank people when they share.))

DID YOU KNOW?

There are FIVE types of harnesses! Which one you use will depend on the nature of the work you’re doing:

- “A” – For fall **arrest** and restraint applications (most commonly used)
- “D” – For **descent** (i.e., rescues)
- “E” – For **escape** (i.e., confined space work)
- “L” – For **ladder** climbing
- “P” – For **positioning** (i.e., pole climbers)



ASK: Does anyone know what we are looking for when we do our pre-use inspection of a body harness and lanyard? (It's best if you have a body harness with you to show and describe the main points listed below, and as you go.)

Answers: There are 5 *critical* areas to inspect on a harness and lanyard. They are:

Harness/Strap

- Bend the webbing into an upside down "U" shape to check for tears, loose stitching, broken fibers, cuts, general wear and tear.

Connectors and Buckles

- Inspect for loose, distorted, or broken grommets. Belts without grommets should be checked for torn or elongated holes.
- Inspect for distortion and sharp edges. The roller should spin freely on the frame of the buckle.
- Inspect the metal for signs of corrosion or heat damage (blue in colour, rust, etc.)



Hooks (Carabiners, D-Rings, Connectors)

- Inspect all surfaces for sharp edges, cracks, twists, dents, excessive wear, and corrosion.
- Ensure no rivets are bent, loose, or missing.
- For carabiners and snaphooks, open the gate fully and release it freely. Ensure the locking mechanism closes FULLY.



Shock Absorbers

- Check for burn holes, tears, loose stitching, rips, deterioration, and signs of prior activation.

Lanyard

- Inspect for holes, cuts, worn or frayed parts, chemical or heat damage on the load bearing stitching.



ASK: If you find any component of a fall protection system is defective or you are unsure, what should you do?

STATE: DO NOT USE it. Take the items to your supervisor for further inspection or destruction. **DO NOT** take another harness or lanyard and leave this one for someone else to accidentally use! Always use proper lockout tag-out procedures, and if in doubt, ask your supervisor.

NOTE: If you are involved in a fall, the harness and lanyard must be taken out of commission, **regardless if any of the shock load indicators deployed**. After every incident, a harness and lanyard must be inspected and repaired by a manufacturer before it can be used again.

ASK: Does anyone know the next step after inspecting your harness and its components?

That's right...it's time to put it on! The following steps will tell you how to don it correctly:

1. **Unfasten all buckles.** Slip your arms through the harness just like you're putting on a jacket, ensuring the **D-ring is on your back.**

2. **Position the straps on your shoulders.** The chest strap should be across your chest.
3. **Reach between your legs to grab one leg strap,** pull it forwards through your legs and connect it. Repeat with the other strap.
4. **Connect your chest strap.** It should sit about 6 inches below your shoulders and for women, it should rest **just above the breasts.**
5. **Adjust the tightness of all straps.**
 - a. Leg straps: Slide your palms under the straps then make a fist with both hands. You should not be able to pull the fists out from under the straps.
6. Have a co-worker check to ensure your D-ring is sitting between your shoulder blades. If it's too high or low, you risk injury during a fall. Make sure they check the rest of the harness as well.



STATE: This concludes our safety talk about harness inspection and donning today. I hope this was a valuable refresher.

Remember that safety is everyone's responsibility and following your training and these quick guidelines can be the difference between life and death or serious injury. There is **NEVER** a situation where working without fall protection is permitted. Remember that as a worker in Canada, you have the **RIGHT TO REFUSE** unsafe work. If you feel equipment or a task is unsafe, report it to your supervisor immediately.

STATE: If you have any questions regarding the topics discussed today, please let me know. If I don't have an answer for you now, I will direct your question to another individual, if you are comfortable with that. We want you to be safe and feel safe while at work!

DISCLAIMER: *This Safety Talk is not to be used as a replacement for professional Fall Protection Training. All workers who will be working at heights should be trained by a competent person in a manner that ensures they can provide the training provided and observed in the proper use and inspection of fall protection equipment.*

Facilitator, remember to:

1. Ask for the commitment of your employees
2. Answer all questions
3. Thank them for their time and
4. Document that this safety talk occurred

RECORD OF SAFETY TALK

Fall Protection – Inspecting & Donning Your Harness

Company Name:	Work Location Dept.:
Talk Given by:	Date / Time:

Results of inspection, demonstration or other activity or suggestions during talk:

List of All Employees Who Attended the Safety Talk:	
Name (PRINT)	<i>Signature</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
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Signed: _____ Position Held: _____