



# Safety Talk – Fall Protection

September 2012



Falls are typically the second leading cause of workplace fatalities in the U.S. Falls to a lower level account for 85-90% of fall-related fatalities.

Employees must work with heightened awareness when working from heights!

## FALL PROTECTION POLICY

All University employees working from **6 feet** or more above a lower level shall be protected from fall hazards.

### Types of Fall Protection

- **Guardrails** – physical barrier against drop
- **Controlled Access** – restrict access only to authorized workers
- **Monitoring System** – a competent person patrols work
- **Warning Line Systems** – barriers that warn when approaching an unprotected edge
- **Personal Fall Arrest Systems** – personal devices that prevent or control the rate of falls.

### Fall Protection Requirements for Roofs:

- **Low-Sloped:**
  - Guardrails; or
  - Warning line system and personal fall arrest or monitoring system
- **Steep**
  - Guardrails; or
  - Personal fall arrest system
- **Certain roofs on campus have more specific requirements**

### The Three Parts of the Fall Arrest System:

- **Anchor/anchorage connector**
- **Body harness**
- **Connecting device**
  - **Positioning lanyard** – holds a worker in place
  - **Suspension** – lowers or raises a worker
  - **Retrieval** – emergency removal of a worker from a confined space
  - **Fall Arrest Lanyard** – stops a worker from striking the lower level

**SUSPENSION TRAUMA occurs when someone is suspended for too long off of their feet. Person must be removed from the fall arrest system within 5 minutes of the fall.**

**FALL ARREST EQUIPMENT ARE PRONE TO FAILURE!**

**Regular Inspections are Necessary before each use:**

- **Webbing on the lanyard and body harness**
- **D-rings and eyelets**
- **Buckles**
- **Snaps, hooks, and locking mechanisms**

### When to Discard Fall Arrest Equipment:

1. Wears, tears, or frays in webbing on lanyards and body harnesses.
2. Oil, dirt, grease, or other chemicals on webbing.
3. Deformed or cracked D-rings or eyelets.
4. Buckles not securely closing.
5. Failing locking mechanisms.
6. Manufacturer's label is missing from harnesses or lanyards.

### FALL PROTECTION TRAINING

*Required for all employees that are exposed to fall hazards.*

*Additional hands-on training is also required for employees using fall arrest systems.*

*Training shall be arranged through Environmental Health and Safety.*