

## NC DEQ Fall Protection Toolbox Talk



- 1) OSHA requires fall protection above:
  - 4 feet in general industry
  - 5 feet in shipbuilding
  - 6 feet in construction
  - 22 feet on fixed ladders
- 2) Fall protection is not required on extension ladders.
- 3) Work related fatalities caused by slips, trips and falls have been trending upward. There were 865 fatalities in this category in 2022. About 81% of the deaths involved falls to a lower level.
- 4) The OSHA fall protection standard is one law that hasn't been successful. Deaths by fall are much more common in the US than in many European countries.
- 5) Federal OSHA now has a national emphasis program to prevent falls. State-run programs, like ours, must have a similar program that's equally effective. OSHA can perform an immediate inspection any time they see someone working at height.
- 6) When working at height, workers should be protected by a safety net, guardrails, or a PFAS (personal fall arrest system)
- 7) Guardrails are strictly regulated:
  - Top edge must be 39" to 45" above walking surface
  - Midrails are required at mid height
  - Must be smooth and at least 1/4" diameter
  - Must withstand a 200-pound force in any direction without failing (150-pound force on midrails)
- 8) Nets are strictly regulated:

- Height
- Width
- Mesh size
- Borders
- Weekly inspections
- Must be drop tested with 400-pound bag of sand

9) The components of a PFAS include:

- Anchor Point
- Body Wear (harness)
- Connecting Device (lanyard or fall limiter)

10) Lanyards must be equipped with shock absorbing devices.

11) Self-retracting lanyards work similar to a seat belt and are considered better than lanyards because they restrict falls to about 2 feet. A regular lanyard usually allows a 6-foot fall, plus the expansion of the shock absorbing device.

12) All fall protection components should be inspected before each use by the worker, at least annually by a competent person, and more often than annually if recommended by the manufacturer.

13) Anchor points must support either 5,000 pounds or a safety factor of at least 2 times the maximum falling arresting force of the PFAS.

14) Free fall distance cannot be more than 6 feet (less if necessary to prevent contact with the lower level).

15) Work at height must be supervised by a “competent person”. OSHA defines this person as “one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.”

16) If you are ever suspended by a lanyard lift your knees to a sitting position to prevent suspension trauma. This position prevents blood from pooling in your feet and increases blood supply to the heart and brain.

17) Unguarded edges: You may work within 15 feet of an unguarded edge without fall protection if the work is “infrequent and temporary”. Best practice is to have a

spotter to warn the employee if he/she gets closer than 15 feet to the unguarded edge.

- 18) Employees should be trained in the use, handling, care, inspection, and limitations of fall protection equipment. This training should be documented in writing and signed by the trainer. Employees should work in pairs and have an emergency plan including who to contact in an emergency.

## NC DEQ Fall Protection Toolbox Talk Quiz Key



- 1) OSHA requires fall protection above \_\_\_\_\_ feet in general industry.
- 2) Is fall protection required on extension ladders?
- 3) Name the three options OSHA allows for fall protection.
- 4) Name the three components of a PFAS.
- 5) Lanyards must be equipped with what?
- 6) How often should a worker inspect fall protection gear?
- 7) How close can you work to an unguarded edge without fall protection if the work is “infrequent and temporary”?
- 8) If you are suspended by a lanyard, what should you do with your feet?
- 9) What is a “competent person”?
- 10) A PFAS must not allow a fall of more than \_\_\_\_\_ feet.

## NC DEQ Fall Protection Toolbox Talk Quiz Key



- 1) OSHA requires fall protection above \_\_\_\_\_ feet in general industry. (Four)
- 2) Is fall protection required on extension ladders? (No)
- 3) Name the three options OSHA allows for fall protection. (safety net, guardrails, or a PFAS (personal fall arrest system))
- 4) Name the three components of a PFAS. (anchor point, harness, connecting device or lanyard)
- 5) Lanyards must be equipped with what? (shock absorbing devices)
- 6) How often should a worker inspect his fall protection gear? (every time before use)
- 7) How close can you work to an unguarded edge without fall protection if the work is “infrequent and temporary”? (15 feet)
- 8) If you are suspended by a lanyard, what should you do with your feet? (raise them as if in a sitting position)
- 9) What is a “competent person”? (someone who has the knowledge to recognize and the authority to correct unsafe conditions)
- 10) A PFAS must not allow a fall of more than \_\_\_\_\_ feet. (six)