



February Safety Talk

Fall Protection – Basic Types

Working at heights can be very dangerous; you don't have to fall far to be killed or injured.

Employees who are exposed to a fall of 3m (10ft) or greater or where a fall from a lesser height involves an unusual risk of injury, must implement and use a fall protection system.

When developing a Fall Protection Plan or implementing a fall protection system, the correct system must be chosen in the following order:

- 1. Engineering controls**
- 2. Guardrails**
- 3. Fall Restraint**
- 4. Fall Arrest**
- 5. Alternate written procedures (such as Control Zone and Safety Monitor)**

Standard Guardrail System:

The standard guardrail system is designed to physically separate a worker from the edge of an opening, thus eliminating the hazards of falling over the edge.

Fall Restraint System:

The fall restraint system is designed to restrict the movements of a worker performing duties at heights or to confine the worker to a position or location, so that the potential for falling is minimized or eliminated. The fall restraint system must include the following:

- Full body harness, depending on the work being performed
- Lanyard
- An individual lifeline
- An anchoring point, which may be able to stand a vertical load capacity of 363kg (800 lbs) in any one direction required to resist a fall.

Fall Arrest System:

The fall arrest system is designed to keep a worker who has fallen as close to the work platform as possible. The fall arrest system must include the following:

- Full body harness (safety belts are not permitted)
- Deceleration lanyard (shock absorber)
- Individual lifeline
- Anchorage point able to stand a load capacity of 22kN (5000lbs) in any direction to resist a fall

Alternate procedures such as Control Zone with or without a Safety Monitor:

If Engineering controls, guardrails, fall restraint or fall arrest systems cannot be used, alternate procedures acceptable to the Board may be used, such as a control zone with or without a safety monitor. This is the **LAST RESORT** as a fall protection system.

The procedure must be in writing and communicated to all workers. The purpose of this system is to limit exposure to potential falls to a minimum number of workers. The system may consist of the following two components:

- A control zone of a minimum 2 meters in width and
- A control monitor to control the inadvertent approach by a worker to the edge of the elevated work area

Refer to WorkSafeBC Occupational Health & Safety Regulation Part 11 for full information

