British Columbia Municipal Safety Association

NOVEMBER SAFETY TALK

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Topic: Inspecting Personal Fall Protection

Fall protection equipment must be inspected before each use. Do you know what to look for?

Inspect the webbing (body of belt, harness or lanyard)

- Inspect the entire surface for damage. Beginning at one end, bend the webbing in an inverted "U". Holding the body side of the belt toward you, grasp the belt with your hands six to eight inches apart. Watch for frayed edges, broken fibers, pulled stitches, cuts or chemical damage. Broken webbing strands generally appear as tufts on the webbing surface.

Inspect the buckle

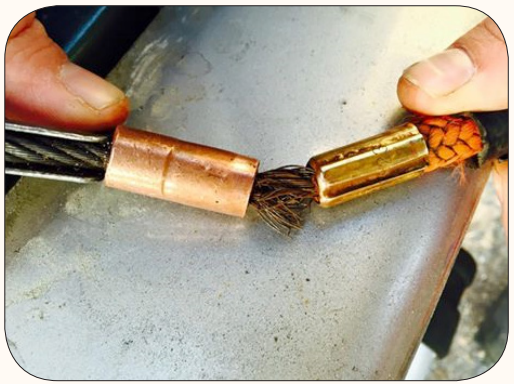
- Look for loose, distorted or broken grommets.
- Inspect the buckle for distortion and sharp edges.
- Check that rivets are tight and cannot be moved.
- Inspect for pitted or cracked rivets that show signs of chemical corrosion.

Inspect the lanyard

- Rotate the rope lanyard and inspect from end to end for fuzzy, worn or broken or cut fibers. Weakened areas have noticeable changes in the original rope diameter.
- Replace when the rope diameter is not uniform throughout.

If you can't see it, you can't inspect it!

- Not all components of fall protection equipment may be visible for inspection. Some may be hidden under shrink-wrapped rubber, others beneath a crimped ferrule sleeve.
- Repeated bending can break wires, resulting in failure of the safety equipment when you need it the most.
- If you have a wire core lanyard that is crimped rather than spliced or has rubber shrink-wrap over connections, and doesn't have a swiveling snap/carabiner, remove it from service (and destroy it).



Inspect the hardware (forged steel snaps, D-rings)

- Inspect for cracks, dents, bends, rust, deformation or other defects.
- Replace the belt if the "D" ring is not at a 90 degree angle and does not move vertically independent of the body pad or "D" saddle.
- Make sure that hardware is not cutting into or damaging the belt or harness.
- Inspect tool loops and belt sewing for broken or stretched loops.
- Inspect snaps for hook and eye distortions, cracks, corrosion, or pitted surfaces. The keeper (latch) should be seated into the snap nose without binding and should not be distorted or obstructed.

Follow Manufacturers Instructions

The information shown here is very general; check the manufacturers information for specific areas you need to inspect for your particular equipment.

In addition, if your fall protection equipment has arrested your fall, it must be removed from service and not returned to service until inspected and recertified as safe for use, by the manufacturer or by a professional engineer.