



Organizational and Safety Solutions

Fall Prevention and Fall Protection

Ultimately, the best way to protect employees from falls over 4 feet (OSHA General Industry) and 6 feet (OSHA Construction Industry) is to eliminate the chance of the employee falling in the first place. If adequate stairways are not available, proper ladder selection and usage are keys to worker safety when moving from one level to the next. . This information guide is directed at protecting workers once they are at a walking/working level that requires some form of fall protection.

First, let's clarify the differences in controls. Fall **prevention** ensures that the employee never leaves the working surface. Fall **protection** essentially "catches" the employee from the air. The primary focus should always be prevention. Without a doubt, properly installed rail systems are the first choice for this control:

- <http://garlocksafety.com/products#roof-top-safety> <http://www.raptorsafety.com/>
- <http://www.guardianfall.com/performance-safety-products/guardrail-systems>
- http://keesafety.com/products/category/safety_railing_systems
- <http://www.hugsafety.com/>
- <http://www.bodyguardrail.com/>

AES Raptor and Garlock have some of the most interesting and varied options for fall prevention and protection observed in the field.

These options don't just include rail systems. Another option to prevent falls is by use of "fall restraints," which makes certain a worker is unable to reach the roof edge. The idea of fall restraint is to keep the worker from ever reaching the fall exposure – much like a dog on a chain (get that image of a mean junkyard dog with the worn line of territory). This requires careful attention by the exposed worker to make certain the fall restraint system is used in the proper way. Several of the rail manufacturers already listed offer systems for this control. Some others include:

Horizontal Lifelines (Engineered systems that must be installed and used per the manufacturer's exact specifications)

- <http://www.latchways.com>
- <http://us.msasafety.com/>
- www.capitalsafety.com (also providing many other fall protection options)
- <http://www.rigidlifelines.com/>
- <https://www.gorbel.com/Products/fall-protection-equipment.aspx>
- <https://caisafety.com/>

Mobile Carts (wheeled units that provide an anchorage for either fall prevention or fall protection – strict attention must be made to location and swing factors –see below)

- https://panthereast.com/prod/hawk_fall_protection_cart
- <http://www.raptorsafety.com/>
- <http://www.hecousa.com/>

Fall Protection

In the event of an actual fall, specific elements are required for protection: a 5,000-pound anchor point, a lanyard with a deceleration device, a full body harness and appropriate hardware. Keep in mind most of these systems are designed for workers to tie off over their head. This reduces free fall distance and protects the system from damage. Equipment must be approved for use of an anchor point at the floor level. Many manufacturers have come out with “leading edge” equipment for this use. Most also are manufacturing their equipment to meet the new ANSI Z359 standard that adds an additional benefit to consumers. Many of the links already provided will lead you to manufacturers and suppliers of fall protection to meet various needs. Two additional manufacturers to consider are:

- <http://www.fallsafe-online.com/>
- <http://falltech.com/Default.aspx>
- <http://www.frenchcreekproduction.com/>

Fall Rescue

When an employee falls, rescue plans must be initiated. A thorough plan should be in place to help safely rescue the fallen worker. Consideration must be made for preventing additional injury, preventing orthostatic shock, additional fall exposures to the victim, and protecting the rescue team. The previous links provide information on rescue equipment. Proper equipment is important, but not as important as establishing a plan and training work crews on implementing the plan in the event of an emergency.

Conclusion

This fact sheet provided gives a basic review of fall protection requirements and options. For more information, see

https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10922,

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your local PMA Risk Control Consultant.

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