

SAFETY MATTERS CONSTRUCTION SERIES



Personal Fall Arrest Systems

A personal fall arrest system is one protection option that OSHA requires for workers exposed to vertical drops of 6 feet or more on construction sites.

Using Fall Arrest Systems Safely

Ensure that personal fall arrest systems will, when stopping a fall:

- Limit maximum arresting force to 1,800 pounds.
 - Be rigged such that an employee can neither free fall more than 6 feet nor contact any lower level.
 - Bring an employee to a complete stop and limit maximum deceleration distance to 3½ feet.
 - Have sufficient strength to withstand twice the potential impact energy of a worker free falling a distance of 6 feet, or the free fall distance permitted by the system, whichever is less.
- Remove systems and components from service immediately if they have been subjected to fall impact, until inspected by a competent person and deemed undamaged and suitable for use.
 - Promptly rescue employees in the event of a fall, or assure that they are able to rescue themselves.
 - Inspect systems before each use for wear, damage and other deterioration, and remove defective components from service.
 - Do not attach fall arrest systems to guardrail systems or hoists.
 - Rig fall arrest systems to allow movement of the worker only as far as the edge of the walking/working surface, when used at hoist areas.



Safety Matters Construction Series information is extracted directly from OSHA safety materials. For additional information consult www.OSHA.gov