

PREVENT FALLS ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Safe At Work **Ontario**

Ministry of Labour

Workers at provincially regulated workplaces in Ontario have obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations, including:

- working in compliance with the act and its regulations,
- using and/or wearing equipment, protective devices and clothing that the employer requires to be used/worn, and
- reporting to their employer/supervisor the absence of or defect in any equipment or protective device that may be dangerous to workers. (See OHSA section 28.)

Guardrails

Workers must be protected where reasonably possible by a guardrail system that meets regulated requirements when they are at risk of:

- falling more than 3 metres (10 feet)
- falling more than 1.2 metres (4 feet), if the work area is used as a path for a wheelbarrow or similar equipment
- falling into operating machinery
- falling into water or another liquid
- falling into or onto a hazardous substance or object
- falling through an opening on a work surface
- falling 2.4 metres (8 feet) or more from the unprotected edge of:
 - a floor, including the floor of a mezzanine or balcony
 - the surface of a bridge
 - a roof while formwork is in place
 - a scaffold or other work platform, runway, or ramp.



**Train properly. Be aware of dangers.
Keep everyone safe.**

Travel restraint, fall arrest

Where it is not reasonably possible to protect workers from falls by guardrail or travel restraint systems, they must be protected by other means. Protection could include, but is not limited to:

- a fall restricting system that limits free fall to 0.6 metres (2 feet), or
- a safety net designed, tested and installed as per the required ANSI standard, or
- a fall arrest system that:
 - includes a CSA-approved full body harness
 - includes a lanyard equipped with a shock absorber (unless the shock absorber could cause a falling worker to hit the ground or an object or level below the work)
 - is attached by a lifeline (or attached by the lanyard to an adequate, independent fixed support)
 - limits a worker to a peak fall arrest force of 8 kilonewtons (1800 pounds force).

Fall arrest systems must keep a worker from hitting the ground, the level below, or other objects below.

Training

Workers must be adequately trained and given instruction by a competent person about the proper use of the fall protection system.

Refusing work

Workers have a right to refuse work that they reasonably believe is likely to endanger themselves or another worker. Employers cannot take reprisal action against workers who have worked in compliance with the law. (See OHSA sections 43 and 50(1).)

More information

This information has been prepared to assist workers in understanding their obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the regulations. Workers should review “A Guide to the Occupational Health and Safety Act” and other resources on the Ministry of Labour website:

www.ontario.ca/ConstructionSafety

**See something unsafe on the job?
Report it to the Ministry of Labour:
1-877-202-0008**

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