

# Monday Minute

Oct. 31, 2022

## Pre-Use Inspection

Prior to use, each worker must inspect the fall arrest equipment they will use for defects or damage.

Harness Inspection includes the following:

### A. Labels/Tags

All labels must be present and fully legible with the last annual inspection less than 12 months prior to the current date and documented.

### B. Stitching

If any stitches are pulled or broken, the harness must be removed from service. Closely inspect "critical stitching" which will be in a color that contrasts with the webbing.

### C. Webbing

Inspect for cuts, tears, stretching of fibers, fraying, raveling of edges, excessive wear or abrasion, chemical damage, burns, UV degradation, and weld splatter. Hold hands six to eight inches apart and flex webbing into a "U" shape to reveal frayed or broken fiber. The presence of hardened or discolored spots on the webbing indicates chemical or excessive heat exposure.

### D. Connectors

Inspect all metal components including "O-rings", "D-Rings" leg grommets, chest strap connecting hardware, and adjustment components. Look for cracks, heat damage, distortion, corrosion, and excessive wear.

### E. Lanyards

They should be free of cuts, abrasions, burns and deterioration by acids, solvents and other chemicals



*Will my harness  
save me if I fall?*

## Donning a Safety Harness:

As important as it is to inspect a safety harness prior to its use, it is equally important to don the harness in the proper manner.

- Hold the harness by the back D-ring
- Shake the harness to allow all the straps to fall in place
- Slip the straps over the shoulders so the D-ring is located in the middle of the back between the shoulder blades
- Pull the leg strap between your legs and connect to the opposite end; repeat with other leg strap
- If it is a belted harness, connect the waist strap after the leg straps; the waist strap should be tight, but not binding
- Connect the chest strap and position in the mid-chest area; tighten to keep the shoulder straps taut
- After all straps have been buckled, tighten all buckles so the harness fits snugly but allows for full range of movement; pass the excess strap through the loop keepers
- Mating buckle
  - ✓ Pull the center bar buckle completely through the square link
  - ✓ Allow the center bar buckle to fall into place on top of the square link
  - ✓ Pull the loose end of the strap to tighten adjustment of the harness
  - ✓ Slide the keepers to hold any excess webbing
- Friction buckle
  - ✓ Pass webbing under the buckle, over the knurled bar and back down between the knurled bar and frame
  - ✓ Pull the web end to tighten

## What is a safety harness?

A safety harness is defined by OSHA as "straps that secure about the employee in a manner to distribute the fall arrest forces over at least the thighs, pelvis, waist, chest, and shoulders, with a means for attaching the harness to other components of a personal fall protection system."

A safety harness wraps around a worker's body and connects to the rest of the fall protection system so that if the worker were to fall, the harness would hold the worker up while the rest of the system stops the fall. A safety harness also holds a fallen worker upright during a fall, keeping the spine in a vertical position to minimize injury.

