WORKING AT HEIGHTS/ FALL PROTECTION POLICY

Working from heights and falls from heights, even relatively low elevations, can result in serious injuries. The proper use of fall protection equipment-in addition to planning, supervision, and training as it can reduce or eliminate the risk of falling. This policy will outline the requirements that must be satisfied according to the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and Manitoba’s *Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation.*SCOPE

The Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation require all workers, contractors, and/or visitors to use fall protection systems when they could fall:

* A vertical distance of 3 m or more;
* A vertical distance of less than 3 m where there is an increased risk of injury due to the surface or item on which the worker might land;
* Into operating machinery or moving parts of the machinery;
* Into water or another liquid;
* Into or onto a hazardous substance or object;
* Through an opening on a work surface;
* A vertical distance of more than 1.2 m from an area used as a path for a wheelbarrow or similar equipment.

STANDARDS

In Manitoba, anyone working at heights 3 metres (10 ft) or above must be trained and qualified in the proper use of Fall Protection systems.

All employees are to follow manufacturer’s instructions in the use, care, storage, inspection and maintenance of all fall protection equipment.

POLICY

<Organization Name> will uphold all requirements set out in the The Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation and Canadian Standards Association (CSA) to ensure all employees and managers are provided with information and safe work procedures for safely working at heights.

Safe Work Procedures

<Organization Name> will:

* develop and implement safe work procedures to prevent falls at the workplace;
* train workers in the safe work procedures;
* ensure that workers comply with the safe work procedures.

The safe work procedures will identify the fall hazards that may exist at the workplace and set out the measures that will be used to prevent falls at the workplace.

If the workplace requires the use of a guardrail system or fall protection system, the safe work procedures will address the following:

* the location of each guardrail system or fall protection system to be used at the workplace;
* the procedures used to assemble, maintain, inspect, use and disassemble a fall protection system;
* where applicable, the rescue procedures to be used for rescuing a worker after a fall has been arrested.

Guardrails   
  
Where fall hazards cannot be eliminated, permanent or temporary guardrails or handrails form a protective barrier around an opening or edge to prevent a fall to a lower level. The employer must ensure that guardrails meeting the legislative requirements as set out in Part 14 of the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation or other similar means of fall restraint are used when practicable. If the use of a guardrail is not reasonably practicable, the employer and a supervisor must ensure that workers use a travel restraint system that meets the requirements of the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation.

Fall Protection Systems  
  
Part 14 of Manitoba’s Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation require employers to ensure that workers use appropriate fall protection systems and equipment, such as safety harnesses, when working at heights. The employer must ensure that a fall protection system is designed, installed, tested, used and maintained in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Canadian Standards Association and Part 14 of the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation. The employer must ensure that a worker using a fall protection system is trained in its use, care and inspection by a competent person.

Fall Arrest Systems   
  
 When a fall arrest system is used, the employer must ensure that the system:

* Consists of a full body harness with adequate attachment points;
* Is attached by a lifeline or lanyard to an independent fixed support that meets the requirements of Part 14 of Manitoba’s Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation;
* Is designed in accordance with CSA-Design of Active Fall-Protection Systems and CSA-Manufactured Horizontal Lifeline Systems;
* Is manufactured so that a worker’s free fall distance does not exceed 1.2 m excluding the increase in the total fall distance resulting from the use of shock absorbers; and
* Is arranged so that a worker cannot a) hit the ground or an object or level below the work, or b) swing in a manner that poses a risk to the safety or health of a worker.

Inspection and Maintenance  
  
Equipment used in a fall protection system must be:

* Inspected by a qualified person before use on each work shift,
* Kept free from substances and conditions that could contribute to its deterioration, and;
* Maintained in good working order.
* After a fall protection system has arrested the fall of a worker, the employer must ensure that the system is not returned to service until it has been inspected and certified as safe by the manufacturer or a professional engineer.
* When a component of a fall protection system is defective in condition or function, the employer and workers must not use the component and must immediately remove it from service and either return it to the manufacturer to be repaired or replaced or destroy it.

Employee Responsibilities

* Employees must visually inspect their equipment before each use – if it is damaged, worn, or defective, it must be immediately removed from service and tagged.
* Employees must report to their supervisor if any equipment is defective or damaged.
* Employees must follow all safety procedures and make all efforts to perform their duties safely and in accordance with protocol.
* Employees must ensure that where personal protective equipment is required, they are wearing it properly and at all times.
* Employees must visually inspect the work area prior to working at heights to ensure that the area is free from obstructions, debris, or uneven surfaces.