Roofers & Waterproofers
Research and Education
Joint Trust Fund

Fall Protection Toolbox Talk

Falls are the leading cause of death in the Roofing Industry.

Roofers and Waterproofers rank 3rd in the list of the most dangerous occupations in the United States.

Roofers commonly work in high risk locations during the removal and re-application of commercial roof systems.

Identifying potential fall hazards and taking preventative measures to ensure crewmember safety in the workplace is of the utmost importance.

When is Fall Protection needed?

Any work performed at heights of 6ft or greater in construction require some form of fall protection.

A Competent Person can identify the proper components needed to ensure safety for the worker.

Fall protection training allows a roofer or waterproofer to make an informed judgment of the hazard and take the proper steps to correct them.

What are the most common fall hazard areas of concern for a Roofer and Waterproofer?

- **Unprotected sides and roof edges**
- **Skylights**
- **Holes or other roof/floor openings**
- **Ladders**
- **Equipment**
- **Scaffolds**

What Fall Protection systems are available when working on the job?

Guardrails

Hole Covers & Securement

Fall Arrest Systems

Fall Restraint Systems

Safety Nets

Warning Lines and Safety Monitors

Rescue

Questions for the Crew:

What fall hazards are on site?

_____

_____

Name of Crewmembers to Identify Hazards:

_____

Competent Person assigned? Yes ____ No ____

Name of Assigned Competent Person: _____

What Fall Protection equipment or components are available for use?

_____

_____

Name of Crewmembers to Identify Components:

_____

Has the equipment been inspected before use? Yes ____ No ____

Name of Crewmembers performing inspection:

_____

Is the Fall Protection equipment in use adequate for the associated hazard? Yes ____ No ____

Is there a better way to protect the crew from falls? If so, How?

_____

_____

_____

Is Rescue equipment available? Yes ____ No ____

Has the equipment been inspected? Yes ____ No ____

Name of Crewmember performing inspection:

_____

Has a site-specific Rescue Plan been developed and practiced? Yes ____ No ____

Name of Rescue leader: _____

Fall Protection Checklist:

Are fall hazards present? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what form of Fall Protection will be used?

Guardrails:

Job Built or Manufactured? _____

Mobile or Permanent? _____

Do they meet OSHA standards? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember:

Height:
Top rail must be approximately 42 inches above the walking/working surface, with a tolerance of ±3 inches in an outward or downward direction. The top rail must withstand at least 200 pounds of force applied in any outward or downward direction.

Mid-rail:
An intermediate rail must be installed approximately halfway between the top rail and the walking working surface, and withstand 150 pounds of force.

Toe-boards:
Required to prevent falling objects, extending at least 3.5 inches high from the walking working surface and must withstand 50 pounds of force.

Skylights and Hole Covers:

Are Skylights and Roof Holes guarded or covered? Yes ____ No ____

Do the covers or cages meet OSHA standards? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember:

Covers:

Must withstand a minimum of 2 times the intended load.

They must be color coded or marked with "Hole" or "Caution" in a language that everyone on the roof can understand and "Fastened Securely" to prevent displacement.

"Warning lines and safety monitors" cannot be used to barricade a skylight, it must either be a guardrail encompassing all sides, a cage or cover secured in place with the appropriate fasteners.

Holes 2 inches or more in diameter must be covered.

Fall Arrest Systems:

Are all components of a Fall Arrest System on site? Yes ____ No ____

Have all the components been inspected? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember:

Fall arrest components—anchorage, body harness, and connectors (ABC)—must meet strict safety standards to limit maximum arresting forces to 1,800lbs and prevent free falls exceeding 6 feet.

Anchorage (A): Must be independent of worker support, capable of supporting at least 5,000lbs per employee attached, or designed by a qualified person with a safety factor of two.

Body Harness (B): Full-body harnesses are mandatory to distribute fall forces across the thighs and buttocks, keeping the user upright. They must include dorsal (back) D-rings and, where necessary, front/side D-rings for specific tasks.

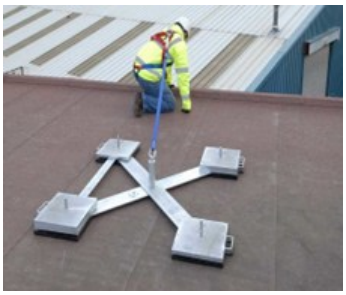
Connectors (C): These include lanyards, deceleration devices, or lifelines.

Requirements: Must have automatic locking gates to prevent accidental disengagement.

Compatibility: Snap hooks must be compatible with the anchorage to prevent "bursting" (gate failure).

Deceleration: Shock-absorbing lanyards or self-retracting lifelines (SRLs) must limit maximum deceleration distance to 3.5 feet.

Fall Restraint Systems:



Are all components of a Fall Restraint System on site? Yes ____ No ____

Have all the components been inspected? Yes ____ No ____

Key Requirements to remember:

A fall restraint system (or travel restraint) is a proactive safety mechanism designed to prevent workers from reaching a fall hazard, such as an edge, roof opening, or dangerous elevation. It acts as a "leash" keeping workers in a safe zone by using a fixed-length or adjustable lanyard, anchor, and harness.

Purpose: It physically restricts a worker's movement so they cannot get too close to an unprotected edge or fall hazard, preventing a fall from ever occurring.
Components: A typical system includes a full-body harness, a fixed-length or adjustable lanyard (non-shock absorbing), and a secure anchorage point.
Functionality: Unlike fall arrest which stops a worker during a fall, a restraint system ensures the worker remains on the working surface.
Training: Workers must be trained to adjust the lanyard length correctly to ensure they cannot reach the edge.

Safety Nets:

Have Fall Protection Safety Nets been installed? Yes ____ No ____

Have all components been inspected? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember:

Installation Height: Nets must be placed as close as practicable under the work surface, and never more than 30 feet below.

Horizontal Extension: The net must extend outward from the edge of the work surface based on the vertical fall distance:

- **Up to 5 ft: 8 ft extension.**
- **5 ft to 10 ft: 10 ft extension.**
- **More than 10 ft: 13 ft extension.**

Clearance: There must be sufficient clearance underneath to prevent a falling person from hitting surfaces or structures.

Strength and Mesh:

- **Border Ropes: Must have a minimum breaking strength of 5,000 lbs.**
- **Mesh Opening: Maximum mesh opening size is 6 inches by 6 inches.**
- **Mesh Crossings: Must be secured to prevent enlargement.**
- **Impact Resistance: New nets must withstand a minimum of 17,500 foot-pounds of impact.**

Inspection and Maintenance:

- **Frequency: Inspected weekly for damage.**
- **Removal of Debris: Tools, equipment, and material must be removed as soon as possible, at least before the next work shift.**

Warning Lines:

Are Warning Lines being used at an unprotected side or edge?
Yes ____ No ____

Do they meet OSHA requirements? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember:

Flagging: High-visibility material must flag the line at no more than 6-foot intervals.

Height: The line must be between 34 inches (lowest point) and 39 inches (highest point) from the walking working surface.

Strength: The rope, wire, or chain must have a minimum tensile strength of 500lbs.

Stanchions: Must withstand a 16lbs horizontal force applied 30 inches above the surface without tipping.

Location: When no mechanical equipment is used, the line is placed at least 6 feet from the edge.
When mechanical equipment is used, the line must be 10 feet from the edge when traveling perpendicular and 6 feet in when travelling parallel.

Access Path: Points of access, materials handling areas, and storage areas must be connected to the work area by a path formed by two warning lines.

Safety Monitor:

Has a Safety Monitor been assigned to watch workers on an unprotected side or edge? Yes ____No ____

Is the assigned worker a Competent Person? Yes ____ No ____

Key requirements to remember :

Competence: The monitor must be a competent person capable of recognizing fall hazards and authorized by the employer to take prompt corrective measures if needed.

Proximity: The monitor must be on the same walking/working surface as the employees and within visual and hearing distance.

Communication: The monitor must be close enough to communicate orally with all employees in a language they can understand.

Duties: The monitor shall not have other responsibilities that could take attention away from the fall monitoring function.

Restrictions: No mechanical equipment can be used or stored in areas where a monitor is the sole method of protection.

Scope: Safety monitors are only allowed for roofing work on low-slope roofs (4 in 12 or less).

Combining Methods:

"Warning lines are often used in combination with safety monitoring systems. When a warning line is used, the monitor must be positioned inside the warning line".

Rescue Systems:

Is Rescue Equipment available on site? Yes ____ No ____

Has the Crew been Trained and Authorized in its use? Yes ____ No ____

OSHA regulations require employers to provide prompt, written, and site-specific rescue plans for suspended workers, as suspension trauma can become fatal in minutes. Rescue plans must outline procedures for self-rescue or assisted rescue, identify specialized equipment (e.g. rescue ladders, winches) and mandate training for all personnel.

Key requirements to remember:

Prompt Rescue: Plans must ensure rapid rescue to prevent suspension trauma.

Written Plan: A site-specific rescue plan is mandatory for any work at heights requiring fall arrest systems.

Equipment Identification: The plan must detail the specific rescue equipment to be used, such as specialized kits, ladders, or aerial lifts.

Qualified Rescuers: Personnel must be trained in both self-rescue and assisted rescue techniques, including the use of rescue equipment, with refresher training at least every two years.

Anchorage Points: Specific, tested rescue anchor points must be identified.

For more information on Fall Protection systems or the 2026 Fall StandDown campaign:

- **#StandDown4Safety**
- **Osha.gov/PreventFalls**
- **stopconstructionfalls.com**