



# DON'T GAMBLE WITH PERSONAL FALL ARREST EQUIPMENT

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*Risk Management, Inc.*

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Unsafe fall arrest equipment contributed to the fatal 150-foot fall of an Oregon construction worker recently. Burn holes in the worker's fall arrest straps and a faulty self-retracting lanyard were blamed for the failure. These could have been discovered if adequate equipment inspections had been conducted.

Would you gamble with your life? A lot of people do just that when they fail to inspect their personal fall arrest equipment daily. They gamble that the equipment will save their life if they fall. Wearing fall arrest equipment without inspecting it provides a false sense of security.

This equipment is subject to tremendous loads during a fall, so unless each component is thoroughly inspected and properly used, it may not save your life. Always follow manufacturers' recommendations when inspecting your equipment. Here are several things to look for.

Belts & Body Harnesses:

- Thoroughly inspect all nylon webbing on belt/body harnesses for frayed edges, broken fibers, burn marks, deterioration or other visible signs of damage. Do the same if the belt or body harness is constructed of other materials. Stitching should be intact and not torn or loose. The belt or harness should be somewhat "soft" and flexible and not stiff from dirt or contaminants.
- Check to see that buckles and "D" rings are not distorted or damaged. Look closely at all components for stress cracks, deformity, gouging, corrosion and sharp edges. Inspect connection points where the buckle or "D" ring is attached to the belt or body harness. Insure that no stitching is pulled and that the buckle or "D" ring is securely attached.
- Inspect all rivets and grommets to be certain they are not deformed, and are securely fastened to the belt or body harness and cannot be pulled loose.
- If you find any of these conditions during the inspection, do not use the equipment.

Lanyards:

- Completely check the entire length of the lanyard. Look for cuts, fraying, deterioration, knots, kinks, burns or visible signs of damage. Stitching should be intact and not torn or loose. Spliced ends must also be carefully examined for damage or deterioration. Check to see that the lanyard is somewhat "soft" and not stiff from dirt or contaminants.
- If using a "shock absorber" type of lanyard, look for the "warning tag" which indicates that the lanyard has been exposed to a fall.
- Snap hooks and eyes should not be distorted or bent. Inspect them for cracks, sharp edges, gouges or corrosion. Check to be sure the locking mechanism is operating properly and that there is no binding of the mechanism.
- If using a self-retracting lanyard (SRL), you must inspect the body of the mechanism for flaws to assure that all nuts, screws and rivets are installed and tight. Also check crimped

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ends or stitching for damage. Inspect the entire length of the SRL for any visible signs of defects.

- Test the locking mechanism by pulling sharply on the cable end to be sure it locks immediately and firmly.

If you like to gamble at the card table--okay. But don't do it with your life!

**Safety Recommendations:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Specific Topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

**M.S.D.S Reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List of Attendees**

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