What? Why? How?

What is a Safety Talk?

A safety talk is a hands-on way to remind workers that health and safety are important on the job.

Safety talks deal with specific problems on site. They do not replace formal training.

Through safety talks you can tell workers about health and safety requirements for the tools, equipment, materials, and procedures they use every day or for particular jobs.

Each safety talk in this book will take about five minutes to present.

Why give a Safety Talk?

In delivering safety talks, your objective is to help workers **RECOGNIZE** and **CONTROL** hazards on the project.

You may be a supervisor, a health and safety representative, the member of a joint health and safety committee, a safety officer, or someone with similar duties.

You give safety talks because you are responsible for advising workers about any existing or possible danger to their health and safety.

Safety talks demonstrate the commitment of employers and workers to health and safety on the job.

What makes a Safety Talk work?

- √ Choose a talk suited to site and work conditions. Don't give a talk on quick-cut saws when none are being used on the job.
- √ Deliver the talk where it will be most appropriate. That could be the job office, out on the site, or near the tools and equipment you are talking about.
- √ Introduce the subject clearly. Let workers know exactly **what** you are going to talk about and **why** it's important to them.
- √ Refer to the Safety Talk for information. But wherever possible use your own words.
- √ Connect key points to things your crew is familiar with on the project.
- √ Pinpoint hazards. Talk about what may happen. Use information from the Safety Talk to explain how to control or prevent these hazards.
- √ Wherever possible, use real tools, equipment, material, and jobsite situations to demonstrate key points.
- √ Ask for questions. Answer to the best of your knowledge. Get more information where necessary.
- √ Ask workers to demonstrate what they have learned.
- √ Keep a record of each talk delivered. Include date, topic, and names of attendees. Photocopy the ***Report Form*** at the back of this manual and use it to keep a record of each session.

Remember

The information you present in a Safety Talk may be the only information workers receive about a particular tool, piece of equipment, type of material, or work procedure on the project.

In choosing and presenting your talk, do everything you can to help workers remember and act on the message you deliver.

Basic Types

Falls are the number one cause of accidental deaths in construction. And you don't have to fall far to be killed or injured.

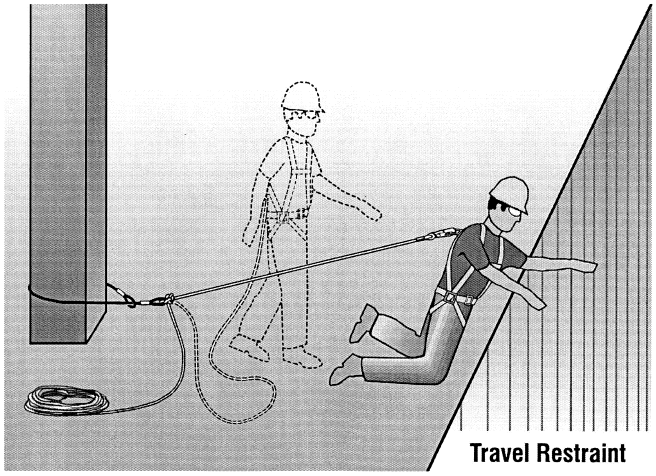
Two basic types of fall protection are travel restraint and fall arrest. Both involve a full body harness.

Travel-Restraint System

A travel-restraint system keeps you from getting too close to an unprotected edge. It *restrains* your *travel.*

Lifeline and lanyard are adjusted to let you travel only so far. When you get to the open edge of a floor or roof, the system holds you back.

A full body harness should be used with travel-restraint systems. You can attach the harness directly to a rope grab on the lifeline or by a lanyard. The lifeline must be adequately anchored.



Travel Restraint

Fall-Arrest System

Where other fall protection is not in place, you must use a fall-arrest system if you are in danger of falling

- more than 3 metres
- into operating machinery
- into water or another liquid
- into or onto a hazardous substance or object.

A fall-arrest system consists of a full body harness, a lanyard, and a shock absorber.

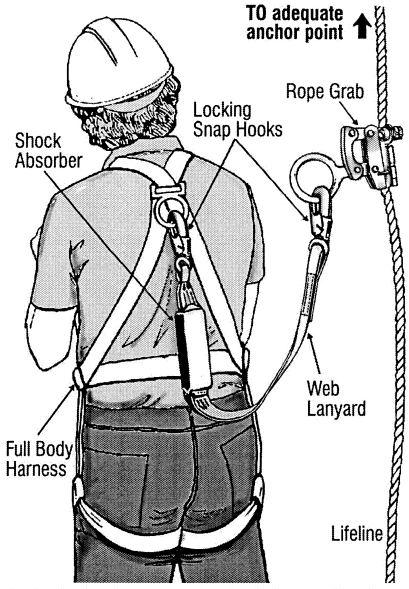
You can connect the lanyard

- directly to adequate support OR
- to a rope grab mounted on an adequately anchored lifeline.

A full body harness must also be worn and tied off when you are

- on a rolling scaffold that is being moved
- getting on, working from, or getting off a suspended platform, suspended scaffold, or bosun's chair.

Whether you're using travel restraint or fall arrest, your lifeline must be adequately anchored. This means able to support the weight of a small car (about 3,600 pounds). Fall-arrest loads can be high.



Full Body Harness and Fall Arrest System

Approvals & Inspection

[This talk should include hands-on inspection of equipment.]

If you are exposed to the risk of falling, your safety harness may be all that keeps you in construction and out of the hospital.

Safety harnesses must be approved either by ANSI (the American National Standards Institute) or CSA (the Canadian Standards Association).

Using an approved harness means trusting your life to equipment that has been designed and tested to perform the right way.

Look for ANSI or CSA labels on lanyards, shock absorbers, and rope grabs. The label means that the equipment has been manufactured to meet high standards.

Before using fall-arrest equipment, check components carefully.

Harness

Make sure that

- hardware and straps are intact and undamaged
- moving parts move freely through their full range of motion
- webbing is free of burns, cuts, loose or broken stitching, frayed material, and signs of heat or chemical damage.

Lanyard

- Fasten it securely to the D-ring on the harness.
- Inspect for fraying, kinking, and loose or broken stitching.
- Check hardware for rust, cracks, and damage.
- Check shock-absorbing lanyards regularly. Look for torn stitching on tearaway types. Check other types for damage such as cracks and loose parts.

Lifeline

- Inspect fibre rope lifelines for fraying, burns, kinking, cuts, and signs of wear and tear.
- Check retractable block lifelines for smooth operation. Pull out line and jerk it suddenly. Braking action should be immediate and tight.

Remember – Any equipment involved in a fall arrest must be discarded or removed from service until the manufacturer certifies that all components are safe for reuse.

Guardrails

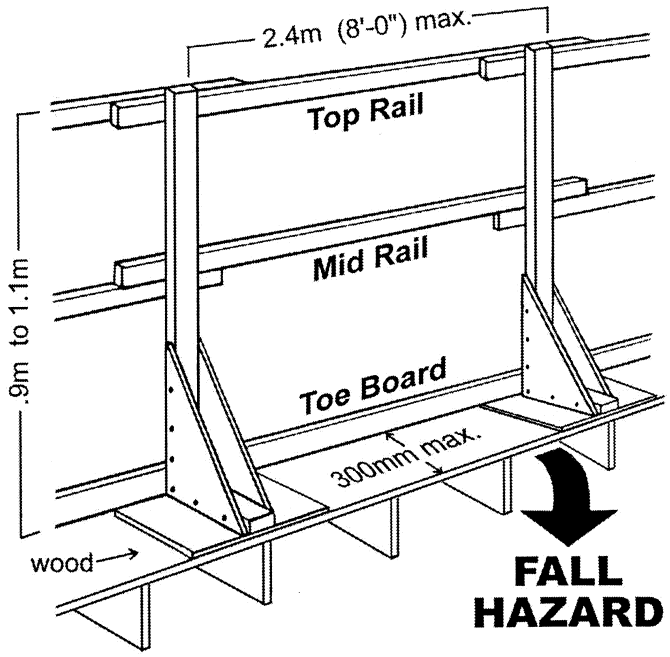
Falls are the number one cause of accidental deaths and serious injuries in construction.

On many sites, guardrails are the most common and convenient means of fall protection.

Where possible, guardrails must be installed along the open edges of roofs and floors, on formwork, scaffolds, and other work surfaces, and wherever workers are exposed to the hazard of falling.

Openings in floors and flat roofs can be readily protected by guardrails.

Guardrails must be installed no more than 300 millimetres (1 foot) from the open edge. They must be able to withstand all loads specified in the construction regulation (Ontario Regulation 213/91).



Posts supporting a wooden guardrail should be no more than 8 feet apart. There are different ways of bracing the posts on wooden guardrails and securing them to slab floors or other surfaces.

For maximum resistance to sideways force, the top rail of wooden guardrails should be laid flat.

Guardrails can also be wire rope and manufactured systems of metal frames and wire mesh.

Well-anchored posts are essential. We can use vertical shoring jacks, screw-clamp posts, clamp binding posts, or posts that fit into sleeves cast right in the slab.

Sometimes guardrails have to be removed to land material or make installations along floor or roof edges.

The open edge should be roped off and marked with warning signs. Workers inside that area must wear fall protection and be properly tied off.

All guardrails – especially wood guardrails – should be inspected regularly.

Guardrails are the best method of protecting workers around openings in floors and roofs.

But sometimes they're not practical. Securely fastened covers made of planks, plywood, or steel plate will have to be used instead. Covers must be strong enough to support any weight to be reasonably expected.

There's always the danger that someone will pick up the plywood to use somewhere else. Workers have even removed covers from openings and then fallen through.

That's why covers should be clearly identified in bright paint with warning signs. DO NOT REMOVE. DANGER! HOLE IN FLOOR. Whatever it takes.

[Review types of guardrail used on site. Ask your crew to identify any other areas where guardrails should be installed.]

Use this master to make copies. Fill out a Report Form for each talk delivered.

Report Form

CSAO'S SAFETY TALKS

Title of Safety Talk _____

Company	**Project**
Talk given by	**Date**

Crew attending

List other topics discussed during the talk

Concerns	**Response/follow-up**

Signed _____ **Title** _____

Retain a copy for company records.

Construction Safety Association of Ontario
1-800-781-2726 www.csao.org