

Tool Box Talk

Fall Protection Anchor Systems

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What are Fall Protection Anchors?

Anchors are a component or subsystem of a fall protection system used to connect other parts of a fall protection system to an anchorage—a secure connection point—and includes an anchorage connector. There are three basic types of anchor systems for fall protection:

Designed Fixed Support—*load-rated anchors* specifically designed and permanently installed for fall protection purposes as an integral part of the building or structure (ex. Roof anchors on high-rise buildings). Designed fixed support can be used to anchor a fall-arrest system, fall-restricting system, or travel-restraint system, if the support has been installed according to the building codes and regulations and is safe and practical to use.

Temporary Fixed Support—*anchor systems* designed to be connected to the structure using specific installation instructions (ex. Nail-on anchors used by shinglers).

Existing Structural Features or Equipment —*not intended as anchor points, but verified by a professional engineer or competent person as having adequate capacity to serve as anchor points* (ex. Roof top mechanical rooms, structural steel, or reinforced concrete columns)

Safety Tips

- ✘ Never anchor to roof vents, roof hatches, small pipes and ducts, metal chimneys, TV antennas, stair/ balcony railings, or fixed-access ladders.
- ✘ When existing structural features or equipment are used as anchor points, avoid corners or edges that could cut, chafe, or abrade fall protection components.
- ✘ Where necessary, use softeners such as wood blocking to protect connecting devices, lifelines, or lanyards from damage.

Legislation Requirements

According to **Section 116.3** of the *Occupational Health and Safety, 1996* regulations; where a worker uses a personal fall arrest system or a travel restraint system, an employer, contractor, owner, or supplier shall ensure:

- ✓ anchor points to which the personal fall arrest system is attached have an ultimate load capacity of at least 22.2 kilonewtons (5000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied.
- ✓ temporary anchor points have an ultimate load capacity of 3.5 kilonewtons (800 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied and is installed/used according to manufacturer's specifications; is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only; is removed by the last worker from use on the earlier of the date the work project for which it is intended is completed; and the time specified by the manufacturer
- ✓ permanent anchor points have an ultimate load capacity of at least 8.75kN (2 000 pounds-force) per worker attached in any direction in which the load may be applied; is installed and used according to manufacturer's specifications; and is permanently marked as being for travel restraint only

For more information or for advice on specific applications, see your local fall protection supplier.



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