

## SAFE WORK AT HEIGHTS – THE DEADLIEST HAZARD IN CONSTRUCTION

**TODAY'S REALITY:** Falls are killing us. Literally. It's the leading cause of death in construction and trades.

- In 2022, 865 U.S. workers died from slips, trips, and falls.
- 680 of them fell from height—the highest number ever recorded.
- In Canada, over 40% of construction deaths are from falls.

And these weren't people falling off skyscrapers. These were pros like us doing normal jobs:

- Installing ductwork
- Fixing rooftop units
- Replacing solar panels
- Working on ladders, lifts, or platforms

Most of them weren't new. They were skilled, experienced workers. They didn't fall because they were careless. They fell because something was missed—like proper gear, clear planning, or someone speaking up.

### A HARNESS ISN'T A PLAN

- Wearing a harness doesn't make you safe.
- Using it right and being part of a safe crew system does.
- What keeps us alive is how we prepare, work, and watch out for each other.

**ASK: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO EVERY TIME YOU WORK AT HEIGHTS?** Here are the answers:

### 1. KNOW THE PLAN BEFORE YOU START

- ✓ What's the job? Where's the risk?
- ✓ What are you using—ladder, lift, scaffold?
- ✓ What's the fall protection system and where do you tie off?
- ✓ Who's trained to do rescue if something goes wrong?

🚧 If nobody can answer that... STOP. You're not ready to start.

### 2. DO A REAL HAZARD CHECK

- ✓ Don't assume the area is good just because it looks familiar.
- ✓ Check the surface. Look for loose materials, weather issues, edges, or bad anchor points.
- ✓ A 12-foot fall can snap your spine.
- ✓ A 30-foot fall is almost always deadly.

### 3. INSPECT YOUR GEAR—EVERY TIME. Don't trust your life to something you didn't check.

- ✓ Look for frays, cuts, rust, loose stitching, cracked hardware.
- ✓ Make sure it fits right and your anchor point is solid.
- ✓ Ask yourself: "If I fall, will this hold?" If you're not 100% sure, stop and get it fixed.

# TOOL BOX TALK



**4. MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE RESCUE PLAN.** If you fall and end up hanging, it's a race against the clock. You've got minutes before your body starts shutting down.

- ✓ Who's coming to get you?
- ✓ What gear do they need?
- ✓ Do they even know the plan?

If there's no clear answer—speak up. Lives depend on it.

**5. LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER.** If you see someone skipping the harness, climbing unsafely, or ignoring the plan—say something.

- ✓ Don't wait. Don't walk past it.
- ✓ Real crews back each other up. That's how we all go home safe.

## LET'S TALK – Q&A FOR THE CREW

**Q1: Why do experienced workers still fall?**

👉 It's usually not stupidity—it's rushing, getting too comfortable, or thinking "I've done this a hundred times."

**Q2: What should you do if someone's working unsafely at height?**

📢 Speak up. You might save their life—and your own if they take you down with them.

**Q3: How often do you inspect your fall gear?**

🧰 Before every use. No exceptions.

**Q4: What's a rescue plan—and do you know it for today's job?**

🕒 A plan that spells out who helps, how fast, and with what. If you don't know it—you need to ask before going up.

**Q5: Who's responsible for making sure you're safe up there?**

👤 YOU. And your crew. It's not just the supervisor's job—it's every worker's responsibility.

**FINAL WORD.** No one plans to fall. But if something's missing—gear, planning, communication—that's when it happens. Be the guy who checks. Be the person who speaks up. Because when you fall, it's too late to wish you did.

**NEED SUPPORT?** 1Life Workplace Safety Solutions can help make working at heights safer, simpler, and part of the job—not extra work. Start your Free Trial Today! [www.1LifeSoftware.com](http://www.1LifeSoftware.com)

**Facilitator, remember to:**

1. Ask for the commitment of your employees,
2. Answer all questions,
3. Thank them for their time and
4. Document that this safety talk occurred.