

Tacoma maritime .pdf



Fall Protection Harness Inspection

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Comments:

Inspect Before You Tie Off!

Today we're going to talk about something we wear all the time when working at heights and that's our fall protection harness.

We use them all the time, so it's easy to get comfortable and just throw one on without really looking at them. But here's the deal, a harness only works if it's in good condition and used the way it was designed. If we skip inspections or don't understand the features, we trust our lives to equipment that might not protect us when we need it most.

Long before you ever tie off, take the first step and **inspect your harness**.

Why Inspecting Your Harness Matters

Fall protection equipment takes abuse in the field; dirt, moisture, sharp edges, sun exposure, getting tossed in gang boxes, you name it. Damage doesn't always jump out at you right away.

A harness can look fine but still fail when under load. That's why inspections are required before every use, not just occasionally.

Think about it this way, if you wouldn't climb a ladder with a cracked rail, don't trust a harness you haven't checked.

[How to Inspect Your Harness](#) (click on link for video demo)

Start at one end and work your way through the entire harness so nothing gets missed.

Webbing

Look for cuts, fraying, pulled fibers, burns, or excessive wear.

Watch for discoloration, stiffness, or chemical damage.

Run the webbing through your hands, you'll often feel damage before you see it.

On the newer Werner harnesses the blue fabric turns red when damaged, making it easier to spot defects.

Stitching

Check for loose, cut, or missing stitches.

Stitching holds everything together, if it's damaged, the strength is reduced.

D-Rings and Hardware

Look for cracks, corrosion, deformities, or sharp edges.

Make sure buckles connect, lock, and adjust the way they should.

Labels and Tags

The manufacturer label must be clearly legible.

If the label is missing or unreadable, the harness must be removed from service.

Check to ensure the annual inspection has been completed by a competent person, if it hasn't, please reach out to a member of the safety team.

If anything looks questionable, tag it out of service and grab another harness. Never try to fix or modify any fall protection equipment yourself.

[Werner Harness :Chair in the Air: Rescue Feature](#) (click on link for video demo)

On our new Werner harnesses, they include a rescue feature called the :Chair in the Air:. It's designed to help with comfort and circulation if someone ends up suspended after a fall.

These relief handles:

Help distribute your weight more evenly.

Reduce pressure on your legs during suspension.

Help improve circulation and reduce fatigue.

This feature does not replace proper fall protection planning.

General Harness Reminders

Harnesses must fit properly, snug but comfortable, with no loose straps.

The chest strap should be positioned at mid-chest level (not at your stomach or up near your neck).

The dorsal D-ring should sit centered between your shoulder blades.

Leg straps should be snug; you should only be able to fit a flat hand between the strap and your leg. Keep pockets clear of tools or bulky items that could interfere with the fit or cause injury during a fall.

Always connect to an approved anchorage rated at 5,000 lbs. per employee attached, or to a properly engineered fall-protection system.

Key Takeaways

Inspect your harness before every use : no shortcuts.

Check webbing, stitching, hardware, and labels every time.

If something doesn't look or feel right, take it out of service.

Know how your harness works, including trauma straps or the Chair in the Air feature.

Your fall protection is only as good as the gear you put on, make sure it's right before you tie off.

Remember This!

Your harness is the last line of defense between you and the ground. Take the extra minute to inspect it : it matters. For additional fall protection training videos and others, please visit the Videos tab on your LMS site.