



Toolbox Talks

HARNESSE INSPECTIONS



A thorough inspection of a fall protection body harness to ensure it is safe to use can be the critical difference between a routine task and a life-altering incident.

Initial Inspection - When you receive the harness from the manufacturer, perform a preliminary inspection to make sure it's the right harness and does not have any defects. Confirm the model number, the size, the fit, and the condition.

Frequent Inspections - An inspection should be completed by the person who is going to wear the harness before every use.

Periodic Inspections - A documented inspection of the harness that occurs at least once every 12 months is critical. Maintain records of these inspections.

As you begin the inspection, start at the top of the harness. Examine the hardware first including the buckle and connection point. Make sure the hardware moves freely and is not defective. If you recognize any of these issues with the hardware, do not use the harness.

- defects, deformities, corrosion, or cracks on the D-ring, fasteners, adjusters, or other hardware
- missing or bent grommets or any grommets that are not fully secure (loose)

After inspecting the hardware, then inspect the straps and webbing of the harness. Use your hands to feel for heat damage while visually inspecting the harness at the same time. If you recognize any of these issues with the harness, do not use it.

- loose or frayed stitching
- worn or damaged straps or webbing
- foreign objects (staples, duct tape) adhered to the fabric
- damage from corrosives, chemicals, flames, or weld splatter
- any kind of cuts or holes, intentional or from wear
- fabric damage from paint or grease

➤ During visual harness inspections, hold the components and perform a “hand over hand” inspection. Grasp the webbing and bend it, checking both sides. This will create some surface tension making damaged fibers or defects easier to see.

➤ If a harness fails an inspection for any reason, even if you think it's not a big deal, the harness should be removed from service and tagged so that it is not used again before it can be repaired or replaced.

➤ Do not write your name with a marker on the straps of the harness. This introduces a chemical onto the load bearing straps and it could fail inspection.

