

# Safety



## Fall Protection

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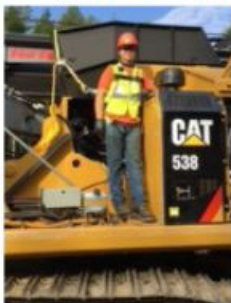
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Today let's talk fall protection. The OSHA general industry rule is anything above four feet needs to have some kind of barrier (hand railings), or you need to have fall protection to protect you if you fall. In the world of safety, I get emails from OSHA about what they are finding and fining in the working world. Falling protection is mentioned in every update I read. This is clearly something they are looking for when they come around and do inspections.

Today I received an email noting that fall protection was cited as the number one violation (6,010 citations) for OSHA & number 8 (1,773 citations) for not providing proper training. In logging I think the piece of equipment that has the most exposure is the delimeter because we need to get on top regularly to grease the top rolls and inspect the upper boom components.

A full body harness is a simple and inexpensive way to go to give your operators more protection. We experimented with a body harness on the Mechanized Logging Operations Program (MLOP) in the summer of 2020. When I was putting the plan into motion, I did not think that it was going to go well or be easy. I could not have been more wrong.

I first priced out a harness that was not expensive (about \$130.00) that would be able to adjust to my smallest or largest student (being a big guy myself I don't like wearing something that does not fit and restricts my movements). The added bonus was that I found a harness that came in a 5-gallon pail with an easy to remove lid. This provides a simple



way to store the harness in a dry clean environment. (In the old days that was always a struggle to keep harnesses clean & dry).

The next challenge was to find a good anchor. OSHA requires only a two-foot free fall before the harness catches you and the anchor needs to be able to hold 5,000 lbs. force applied to it. I think the obvious answer here is the two cables that help support the boom. The two cables are 5/8 wire in size and well exceed the strength requirements for an anchor. I have the students climb up the right side of the delimeter where the steps are good and hook into the closest cable and then grease that side of the boom. Then climb into the tree pan and grease the hose roller end.

The next move is important, I have them climb over the boom leaving the anchor on the cable. On the cab side is where there is the most exposure from falling and leaving the anchor on the far side of the cable limits how far they could fall before the harness catches them. After they are all done with greasing and inspecting I have them climb down the way they climbed up using all the steps and hand holds and only unclipping after they are down as low as they can go and still reach the anchor.

You can see in the picture the student is clipped in on the cab side greasing the low fittings on that side while the cab is rolled forward. Let's work safe whether it is on the ground or on top of the delimeter.

### Things to remember:

1. Train all your employees on wearing a full body harness that might need to work above 4 ft. off the ground at least once a year, using a competent trainer. OSHA requires this and often companies are getting fined not for not having the fall protection but not having documentation of training their employees on fall protection.

Train your employee to know the following about fall protection:

- When they need to use the equipment
- How to inspect the equipment
- How to use the equipment
- The limitations of the equipment that you are providing

- How to perform a rescue if someone falls
  - How to document the use of and inspection of the equipment
  - The procedures & policies of using this equipment
  - How to report damage & close calls with the equipment
- Make sure the equipment is in serviceable condition and available to the employees.
  - Inspect the equipment before each use.
  - Write a policy & procedures for your employees to follow for each piece of equipment.
  - Review & document the review of the policy once a year.