

Fall Protection Program

POLICY

All departments at Whitworth University will provide adequate fall protection to any employee who is exposed to fall hazards of four feet or more during the course of his or her work. All employees are responsible for using fall protection equipment in situations as described. Whitworth University will also ensure that floor holes and floor openings are properly guarded on all exposed sides to prevent a fall from ground level.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors: Supervisors are responsible for providing fall protection training to all affected employees and will ensure that the training provided is specific to each employee's job duties. Supervisors will also be responsible for providing fall protection equipment to each employee and will inspect the equipment according to the manufacturer's specifications to ensure its functioning properly.

Safety Manager: The Safety Manager/designee will be responsible for providing annual training to all departments with affected employees, documenting each training session, and maintaining the written fall protection plan. He/she will also be responsible for addressing unsafe situations with the employee's supervisor, or in the case of an emergency, addressing the situation directly with the employee and notifying the supervisor in a timely manner following the emergency.

Employees: Employees who are exposed to fall hazards will be required to use the appropriate fall protection equipment and will inspect it before each use. Employees should also report any unsafe conditions to their supervisor and the Safety Manager.

PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

1. General Work

Any employee who will be exposed to a fall greater than 4 feet while on a walking/working surface must use **one** of the following fall protection methods:

- a. A standard guard rail system; *or*
- b. A fall restraint system; *or*
- c. A personal fall arrest system; *or*
- d. A safety net system; *or*
- e. A catch platform.

2. Personnel Lifts

Any employee using a personnel lift will be required to have training in the safe operation of the lift in addition to personal fall protection training. Employees will be required to wear a personal fall arrest system when operating lifts equipped with manufactured tie off points.

3. Working on a Roof

Any employee working on a roof must comply with the following guidelines:

Steep pitched roofs

Employees working on a steep pitched roof (greater than a 4 and 12 grade) must use **one** of the following fall protection methods:

- a. Fall restraint system; *or*
- b. Fall arrest system; *or*
- c. Positioning device system.

Low pitched roofs

Employees working on a low pitched roof (equal to or less than a 4 and 12 grade) must use **one** of the following fall protection methods:

- a. Fall restraint system; *or*
- b. Fall arrest system; *or*
- c. Positioning device system; *or*
- d. Safety monitor and warning line system; *or*
- e. Safety watch system.*

**Safety Watch System Specifications*

When one employee is conducting any repair work or servicing equipment on a roof that has a pitch no greater than four in twelve, employees are allowed to use a safety watch system. Employees must ensure the safety watch system meets the following requirements:

- a. There can only be two people on the roof while the safety watch system is being used: One employee acting as the safety watch and One employee engaged in the repair work or servicing equipment; *and*
- b. The employee performing the task must comply promptly with fall hazard warnings from the safety watch; *and*
- c. Mechanical equipment is not used (see definitions section); *and*
- d. The safety watch system is not used when weather conditions create additional hazards.

A supervisor must ensure that the employee acting as the safety watch meets all of the following:

- a. Is a competent person (see definitions section); *and*
- b. Has full control over the work as it relates to fall protection; *and*
- c. Has a clear, unobstructed view of the worker; *and*
- d. Is able to maintain normal voice communication; *and*
- e. Performs no other duties while acting as the safety watch.

Flat Roofs

Employees working on flat roofs must ensure that there is a barrier at least 39 inches tall at the end of the roof. If no such barrier exists, a fall protection method for low pitched roofs must be used.

Exemption

Roofing work and leading edge work on low pitched roofs are exempt from the 4 foot rule under the General Work section, unless an employee is performing either one of these tasks at 10 feet or more, then he or she must use one of the fall protection methods listed for low pitched roofs. The distance of the fall should be measured from the edge of the roof.

4. Contractors

Contractors will be required to provide their workers with fall protection, in accordance with Washington's Administrative Code, if they will be exposed to fall hazards of four feet or more during the course of their work. Whitworth's Facilities Services department will be responsible for communicating this requirement to contractors before they begin their work.

5. Climbing Wall - Recreation Center

Specific rules and safety procedures apply to the climbing wall in the University's Recreation Center (U-REC). All employees must adhere to the climbing wall rules and safety orientation materials established by the U-REC. For more information about the climbing wall please contact the Assistant Director and Climbing Wall Coordinator at 777-3722.

TRAINING

All employees who have the potential of being exposed to fall hazards are to be trained in the proper use of fall protection annually. Training records will be created and maintained by the Safety Manager in conjunction with department supervisors. The training program will enable the employee to:

- Recognize fall hazards in his or her work area;
- Use appropriate procedures to minimize exposure to fall hazards;

Workers who use or intend to use personal fall protection equipment should also know how to:

- Inspect the equipment before it is used;
- Wear the equipment properly;
- Properly hook-up their personal fall protection using appropriate attachment methods;
- Understand the appropriate anchoring and tie-off techniques;
- Estimate free fall distances;
- Properly store and care for personal fall protection equipment; *and*
- Rescue stranded personnel using the proper procedures and techniques.

INSPECTIONS

Personal fall arrest systems:

- All parts of personal fall arrest systems must be inspected prior to each use for wear, damage, or other deterioration.
- Supervisors must inspect all pieces of fall protection equipment according to the manufactures specifications. Records of these inspections must be kept and maintained by the supervisor and a copy of the inspection sent to the Safety Manager.
- Retractable type lanyards and anchors must be inspected prior to each use for wear, damage, or other deterioration.

RESPONDING TO A FALL

Should a fall occur, follow these steps if the people involved in the fall cannot rescue themselves or a person is injured.

- Always consider your own safety first, then call 911 for rescue and medical aid, as well as Whitworth Security at x4444;
- Have an on-site person trained in first aid respond to the scene;
- Have someone gather all retrieval equipment on site to help with the rescue (i.e., ladders, personnel lifts, harnesses, retrieval systems);
- Make sure only competent personnel attempt a technical rescue;
- Prohibit all nonessential personnel from the fall/rescue site;
- If the person is accessible and someone is trained to do so, provide the appropriate first aid.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The fall protection plan will be evaluated at least annually by the Safety Manager/designee to ensure that it is effective in practice and that it complies with all applicable regulations.

DEFINITIONS

Anchor: Any mechanism to which a fall arrest system can be attached, and must be capable of holding 5000 pounds per attached employee.

Body Harness: Approved manufactured device, consisting of nylon straps that secure to a person in a manner that will distribute the fall arrest forces over the thighs, pelvis, waist, chest, and shoulders, and a means of attaching it to other components of a fall arrest system.

Competent Person: An individual knowledgeable of fall protection equipment, including the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions for the proper use, inspection, and maintenance; and who is capable of identifying existing and potential fall hazards; and who has the authority to take prompt corrective action to eliminate those hazards; and who is knowledgeable of the rules

contained in this part regarding the installation, use, inspection, and maintenance of fall protection equipment and systems.

Deceleration Device: Any mechanism that dissipates or limits energy imposed on a person during fall arrest. (e.g., rope grabs, rip stitch lanyards, special woven lanyards, automatic self-retracting lifelines, etc.)

Fall Arrest System: Used to arrest a person in a fall from a working level at or above 4 feet. (e.g., anchors, connectors, a body harness, and may include a lanyard, deceleration device, or lifeline)

Fall Restraint System: A system in which all necessary components function together to restrain/prevent an employee from falling to a lower level. Types of fall restraint systems include standard guardrail systems, personal fall restraint systems, warning line systems, or a warning line system and safety monitor.

Lanyard: A flexible rope, strap, or webbing that connects a body harness to a deceleration device, lifeline, or anchor.

Leading Edge: The advancing edge of a floor, roof, or formwork which changes location as additional floor, roof, or formwork sections are placed, formed, or constructed.

Lifelines: A flexible line that attaches directly to a person's body harness, lanyard, or deceleration device at one end and to an anchor at the other end.

Mechanical equipment: Means all motor or human propelled wheeled equipment except for wheelbarrows, mopcars, robotic thermoplastic welders and robotic crimpers.

Roofing Work: The hoisting, storage, application, and removal of roofing materials and equipment, including related insulation, sheet metal, and vapor barrier work, but not including the construction of the roof deck.

Walking/Working Surface: Any area including, but not limited to, floors, a roof surface, bridge, the ground, and any other surfaces whose dimensions are forty-five inches or more in all directions, through which workers can pass or conduct work. A walking/working surface does not include vehicles or rolling stock on which employees must be located in order to perform their job duties.

REFERENCES

WAC 296-155-245 through 24525

If you have questions regarding Whitworth University's fall protection plan please contact the University's Safety Manager in the Human Resources office at 777-3236.

Approved By: Gerald Gemmill

Date: 11/7/2014