

Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution: Fall Protection Requirements

This fact sheet discusses specific fall protection requirements in OSHA's revised §1910.269 and §1926, Subpart V. Employers doing work covered by these revised Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution standards must assess the worksite where fall protection is needed to protect workers.

Employers must provide workers with the required fall personal protective equipment (PPE), train workers on its proper use, and on how to abate related hazards. Key PPE requirements for fall protection include:

- Employers generally must ensure that workers use personal fall arrest systems, fall restraint systems, or work-positioning equipment, as appropriate, when they work in elevated locations more than 4 feet (1.2 meters) above the ground on poles, towers, or similar structures. A personal fall arrest system must be rigged so that a worker cannot contact a lower level or free fall more than 6 feet.
- Employers must ensure that their workers using aerial lifts use either a fall restraint system or a personal fall arrest system. A *body belt is never acceptable* as part of a personal fall arrest system, but it is acceptable as part of a fall restraint system. A fall restraint system must be designed to prevent a worker from falling *any* distance.
- Work-positioning equipment typically consists of a body belt or body harness, rigged to allow a worker to be supported on an elevated vertical surface, such as a utility pole or tower leg, and to work with both hands free while leaning. Work-positioning systems must be rigged to *prevent a free fall of more than 2 feet (0.6 meters)*.
- If workers are exposed to hazards from flames or electric arcs, personal fall arrest systems must be capable of passing a drop test after exposure to an electric arc with heat energy of 40 ± 5 cal/cm². In addition, use of fall protection must also comply with the requirements in either Subpart D for maintenance, or in Subpart M for construction.

- Like all PPE, fall protection equipment must be inspected before use to ensure that the equipment is in safe working condition, and workers must be trained on its proper use. Fall protection equipment that is not in safe working condition may not be used.
- The personal protective equipment required by these standards must be provided by the employer at no cost to employees (see 29 CFR 1910.132 and 29 CFR 1926.95).

For additional information, see www.osha.gov/dsg/power_generation.

Workers' Rights

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.
- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary the worker understands) about workplace hazards, methods to prevent them, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. OSHA will keep all identities confidential.
- Exercise their rights under the law without retaliation, including reporting an injury or raising health and safety concerns with their employer or OSHA. If a worker has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days.

For more information, see [OSHA's Workers page](#).

How to Contact OSHA

For questions or to get information or advice, to report an emergency, fatality, inpatient hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye,

or to file a confidential complaint, contact your nearest OSHA office, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory-impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For assistance, contact us. We can help. It's confidential.



www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA (6742)



U.S. Department of Labor