



KEEP SAFE

A Monthly Publication for Texas Electric Cooperatives

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Personal fall protection systems

Falls account for a large percentage of fatal and severe workplace injuries. Climbing poles, working on towers, and using aerial lifts increase the chance of injury for utility workers. It is important to know the proper safety devices, know how to inspect equipment, and be committed to following the fall protection program.

Aerial lifts / buckets

- Always use personal fall protection when working in an aerial lift or bucket. The boom could unexpectedly malfunction.
- Always keep your belt buckle inside the edge of the bucket.

Poles

- Weather changes may cause the pole to become slick.
- A longer-than-expected job may cause you to become tired and lose your grip.

Towers

- The climb up a tower can be very intense and exhausting.
- You may lose your footing and begin to slip.

Employers are obligated to provide maintenance utility workers with a written fall protection plan addressing known hazards, inspection and maintenance of equipment, suitable fall protection, and rescue procedures. This plan should be created by a qualified person who has extensive knowledge and training in fall protection, and executed by a competent person, or someone who is capable of identifying potential hazards and who has the authority to correct them.

The necessary components of a personal fall arrest system

Anchorage: A secure point of attachment for lifelines, lanyards or deceleration devices capable of withstanding a 5,000-pound static force.

Connector: A device used to couple (connect) part of the personal fall arrest system and positioning device systems

together. It may be an independent component of the system such as a carabiner, or an integral component part of the system such as a buckle, D-ring, or a positive double-locking double-acting snap-hook.

Positioning Device: A device permitting the worker the use of both hands while working on a utility pole. This device is allowed only if the potential fall hazard is limited to 2 feet. If the fall hazard is more than 2 feet, a body harness and fall arrest system must also be used.

Body Harness: Straps secured about the employee to distribute the fall arrest forces over the thighs, pelvis, waist, chest and shoulders with means for attaching it to other components of a personal fall arrest system.

Components of a personal fall arrest system also include:

Lanyard: A flexible line of rope, wire rope or strap that has a connector at each end for connecting the body harness to a deceleration device, lifeline or anchorage.

Some lanyards have built-in deceleration capability. Wire rope is not allowed as a lanyard unless it is used with a separate deceleration device.

Deceleration device: Any mechanism, such as a lanyard or connected mechanical device, which limits the amount of energy imposed on an employee during fall arrest.



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Smile your way to contentment

If you let a smile be your umbrella on a rainy day, you may get wet. But there is a certain smile, one out of the 18 kinds cataloged by scientists, that has been shown to have the power to make you feel happy.

And, say researchers in an article in the journal *Psychological Science*, that smile can activate the parts of your brain that regulate pleasant feelings — even when it is artificially induced.

A California psychologist and co-author of the study says the smile, called Duchenne smile after the French neurologist who first mapped the movements of facial muscles, is the same grin that spontaneously crinkles the eyes into crow's-feet during a chuckle.

So if things on the job aren't going quite the way you'd like — you're behind in your production schedule, you misplaced that order from an important client, or your latest raise was a little less than you had hoped for — just try the following: raise your cheeks, part your lips and let your lip corners come up. After that you may see things more positively.

— *Safety+Health*

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Lifeline: A component consisting of a flexible line for connection to an anchorage at one end to hang vertically or for connection to anchorages at both ends to stretch horizontally, and which connects other components of a personal fall arrest system, such as a lanyard, to the anchorage.

Fall protection begins with proper training.

OSHA requires employers to provide training programs for workers who may be exposed to fall hazards. The training must be conducted by a competent person and should address the following topics:

- ✗ The nature of fall hazards in the work area.
- ✗ The correct procedures for inspecting and maintaining fall protection systems.
- ✗ The use and operation of fall protection systems.
- ✗ The limitations of fall protection systems.
- ✗ The role of workers in the fall protection plan.
- ✗ When a personal fall arrest system is necessary.
- ✗ The type of personal fall arrest system needed.
- ✗ How the fall arrest system works and is worn.
- ✗ Proper maintenance of the fall arrest system.

You are the person most responsible for your own safety. Don't make excuses when your life is on the line. Body harnesses are lighter and less bulky than ever before. A personal fall protection system will keep you from falling. Other PPE, such as your hard hat and eye protection, is to protect you from other hazards. Keep your PPE in shape — your safety depends on it.

— *5 minute safety talk*
National Safety Council

Upcoming Loss Control Schools

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| Hotline 1 - 4 School + Hotline Stringing with Hotline 4 <i>Gonzales</i> | September 8 - 12 |
| Underground School <i>McGregor</i> | September 22 - 26 |
| Basic Pole Climbing School <i>Marshall</i> | September 23 - 26 |
| Basic Pole Climbing School <i>Bastrop</i> | September 30 - October 3 |
| Underground School <i>Levelland</i> | October 6 - 10 |
| Hotline 1 - 4 School <i>Livingston</i> | October 20 - 24 |
| Advanced Pole Climbing School <i>Merkel</i> | November 18 - 21 |
| Metering School <i>Merkel</i> | December 2 - 5 |