

# FALL ARREST HARNESS INSPECTION AND USE

Sawmill employees are often required to work at heights. Tasks that require working from heights can be at risk for potential falls which may result in injury or death.

In order to reduce the risk, it may be necessary for you to use a body belt or harness designed to support you in a hazardous work position to reduce the possibility of a fall.

## FOUR STEPS FOR INSPECTION AND USE OF BELTS / HARNESSES

1. INSPECTING THE WEBBING
2. INSPECTING THE BUCKLES
3. INSPECTING THE ROPE
4. CLEANING EQUIPMENT



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## HOW TO INSPECT THE WEBBING (BODY BELT, HARNESS OR LANYARD)

- Inspect the entire surface of webbing for damage. Starting at one end, bend the webbing in an inverted "U." Hold the body side of the belt toward you and grasp the belt with your hands six to eight inches apart.
- Look for frayed edges, broken fibres, pulled stitches, cuts or chemical damage. Broken webbing strands generally appear as tufts.

## HOW TO INSPECT THE BUCKLE

- Inspect for loose, distorted or broken grommets. Do not cut or punch additional holes in the waist strap or strength members.
- Check the belt without grommets for torn or elongated holes that could cause the buckle tongue to slip.
- Inspect the buckle for distortion and sharp edges. The outer and centre bars should be straight. Carefully check corners and attachment points of the centre bar. They should overlap the buckle frame and move freely back and forth in their sockets. The roller should turn freely on the frame.
- Check that rivets are tight and cannot be moved. The body side of the rivet base and outside rivet burr should be flat against the material. Make sure the rivets are not bent.
- Inspect for pitted or cracked rivets that show signs of chemical corrosion.

## HOW TO INSPECT THE ROPE

- Rotate the rope lanyard and inspect from end to end for fuzzy, worn, broken or cut fibres. Weakened areas have noticeable changes in the original rope diameter.
- Replace when the rope diameter is not uniform throughout, following a short break-in period.
- Older ropes have been used longer and have more wear and tear. Testing and inspection is more important with older ropes.

## HOW TO CLEAN THE EQUIPMENT

Basic care increases the life of the unit and contributes to its performance. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to care and clean the equipment. Steps may include:

- Wipe off any surface dirt using water and a dampened sponge. Rinse the sponge and squeeze dry then dip it in a mild solution of water and commercial soap or detergent, work up a thick lather and wash the equipment.
- Rinse the webbing in clean water.
- Wipe the belt dry with a clean cloth and hang to dry.
- Dry the belt and other equipment away from direct heat, and out of long periods of sunlight.
- Store in a clean, dry area, free of fumes, sunlight, corrosive materials, sharp edges or vibration. Ensure it is stored so it doesn't warp or the belt becomes distorted.

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