

Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction

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Success Story

Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council Fall Protection Inspection Stand Down

January 2014



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Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council Fall Protection Inspection Stand Down

The Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council (MACSC) is a group of like-minded construction safety professionals dedicated to the protection of life and property in the construction industry. Its efforts are directed towards sharing safety information for mutual interest, standardizing safety practices, encouraging cooperation and open communication, providing a resource of knowledge, experience and information, assisting contractors with implementing and maintaining safe work practices, and developing a consortium of construction agencies and associations to strengthen the impact of creating safe work sites. The primary goal of the organization is to further construction safety in the Mid-Atlantic Region. The MACSC is centered in the Greater Philadelphia metropolitan area and also covers sites in southeastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, southern New Jersey, and Maryland.

The MACSC consists of construction safety specialists representing construction managers, general contractors, subcontractors, insurance brokers, health care, union representatives, consultants, and construction association representatives. The strength of the organization rests on the commitment of members who regularly attend meetings and participate and serve on committees.

On November 1, 2013, 10 of the construction managers who participate in the MACSC decided to make January 2014 a Fall Protection Equipment Inspection month-long stand down. All personal fall arrest system equipment including body harnesses, lanyards, beam straps, retractable lanyards, and associated devices would be inspected and equipment that did not pass inspection would be removed from use.



Poster developed for the stand down.

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To support this effort, the construction managers asked fall protection manufacturers to provide training and develop checklists prior to conducting the equipment inspections so that the process would be uniform among all the sites. Some of the areas covered in the training included looking for defects or damage such as fraying, unsplicing, kinking, knotting, broken or pulled stitches, excessive

soiling, abrasion, or excessive aging of equipment. Key points on maintenance and storage of equipment were stressed, as well as OSHA inspection requirements under CFR 1926.502.

The training at the Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council was held in December 2013, and each participant received a training certificate. Each individual site and construction manager then selected the time and method that best suited them for the inspection in January 2014. All contractors, subcontractors, and other training participants

Fall Protection Equipment Inspection January 2014 Results

10 Construction Managers Reporting
60 jobsites
236 Contractors
1,161 participants
2,695 pieces of personal fall arrest equipment inspected
498 pieces of personal fall arrest equipment removed from service
18% REMOVAL RATE

In January 2014, ten Construction Managers of the Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council participated in a "Stand-Down" for Personal Fall Arrest Equipment Inspection. Subcontractors were encouraged to pre-inspect their Equipment prior to the CM inspection. Even with pre-inspection, nearly 500 pieces of equipment were removed from service. The effort was supported by the Building Trades of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Licenses & Inspections and OSHA. Please join us for our next targeted activity: Safety Month May 2014.



were encouraged to pass on lessons learned from the training within their companies, and to use them to inspect their own equipment before the construction manager's inspection in January. Further, each subcontractor was expected to have the safety director and/or competent person participate in the inspection of their own equipment.

LF Driscoll Co., LLC, one of the companies participating in the stand down, is a great example of how the individual firms committed to and carried out this effort. Their Corporate Safety Director, Dona File, led the effort, ensuring that 140 hours of training were provided to contractors, workers, and other construction professionals. The training covered comprehensive inspection requirements and the height allowance required for a fall, including swing radius, and stressed practical tips such as telling the workers how to inspect the fabric under buckles for wear and tear. Participants also learned how to scrupulously record their inspection efforts for all the inspection criteria. Interestingly, many self-retracting lifelines were found to be damaged in the last few feet of cable and therefore were removed from service. The workers had an opportunity to practice steps under the guidance of an instructor. So the effort not only removed defective equipment from use, but safe practices were reinforced, and the team effort helped encourage long term safety improvements.



Once trained, a worker inspects his equipment for damages that could cost him his life.

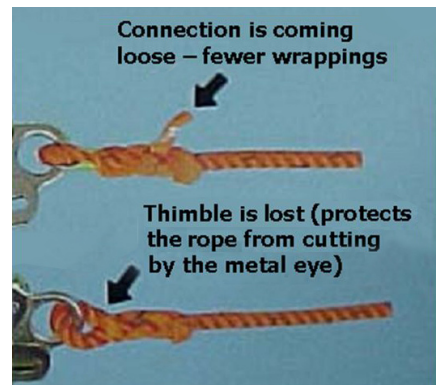
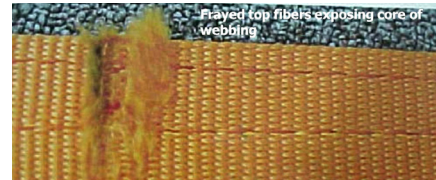
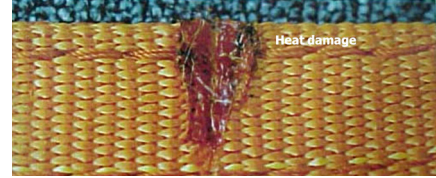
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Although planning for the event took place in only two months, it turned out to be a huge success. All parties involved agreed that the combination of training and inspections accomplished both the removal of faulty equipment from the workplace and the improvement of worker and contractor awareness and knowledge of fall hazards and protection. Sixty active construction sites participated in the month long event, with a total of 236 contractors participating. A total of 1,161 employees were directly involved in the fall protection inspection process, with 2,695 pieces of fall protection equipment inspected. As a result of these inspections 498 fall protection equipment devices were taken out of service (18% removal rate). It should be noted that the construction managers involved had provided advanced notice to their subcontractors prior to the initiation of this event, and as a result many of the subcontractors performed the encouraged pre-inspection prior to the event's actual on-site stand down. Information on the faulty equipment removed prior to the actual site inspections was therefore not captured in these statistics.



Comprehensive inspection training at Driscoll, one of 10 construction firms participating in the fall protection equipment stand down. All parties involved agreed that the combination of training and inspections did more than remove faulty equipment; it also improved worker and contractor awareness and knowledge of fall hazards and protections.

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The MACSC plan is to identify lessons learned from this initial event and to hold the equipment inspection stand down as an annual event. The amount of fall protection equipment inspected was not only remarkable, but the resulting number of pieces removed from service was staggering. The success of this effort is attributable to several things. MACSC as an organization is committed to advancing construction safety among all its members, and over the years has previously had several successful events. This history enabled the organization to support an initiative that covered a broad geographic area. The equipment manufacturers also supported the training effort, reducing the need for each of the 10 companies to develop the training individually. Each of the construction managers at each of the 10 participating companies had bought into the approach taken in the stand down, which was, "We are safety coaches, not safety cops." The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), especially Region III Labor Liaison and Cooperative Program representatives and the Philadelphia Building Trades Safety Committee, encouraged and supported member companies to participate in the effort. In addition, OSHA developed a data collection form so that the success of the effort could be documented.

Fall Protection Equipment Inspection Month

January 2014






Inspection Point	Description
Fabric Components: Webbing	
1	Shoulder
2	Shoulder Strap Retainer
3	Shoulder Ring Strap
4	Thigh
5	Sub-Pelvic
Fabric Components: Stitching	
7	Shoulder Ring Strap
8	Shoulder Strap Tip
9	Shoulder Strap Retainer
10	Shoulder Strap Reinforce
11	Buckle
12	Thigh Strap
13	Thigh Strap Edges
14	Sub Pelvic Strap

Inspection Point	Description
Metal Components: D-Rings/Oval Rings	
15	Back
16	Hip
17	Chest
18	Shoulder
Metal Components: Buckles/Adjusters/Grommets	
19	Adjuster, Torso Strap
20	Tongue Buckle
21	Friction Buckle
22	Quick Fit Buckle
23	Grommets
Plastic Components	
24	Back D-Ring Locator
25	Strap Collar
26	Labels

Poster serves as a reminder of thorough inspections.



Building off this successful effort, the Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council selected **May** as a **SAFETY MONTH** for the **Greater Philadelphia** Region. This effort is supported by MACSC, OSHA, the Building Trades of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Licenses and Inspection Department, and other construction associations. The motto for the Safety Month is: *Many Roles, One Goal: Building Safety Together.*

For reference, the [Fall Protection Equipment Inspection Checklist](#), which is utilized by many of the construction



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managers, may help others to develop their own stand down by reviewing and modifying this checklist for their individual purposes. Please note that the checklist was part of the training process so that practical guidance was included and practiced by all the workers.

Additional supporters of the Fall Equipment stand down event included OSHA, the Philadelphia Building Trades Safety Committee, and the City of Philadelphia's Department of Licenses and Inspections. OSHA Region III representatives participated in event pre-planning meetings, and provided resources (publications, hyperlinks, quickcards, etc.) as well as on-site support for the event in an effort to promote the National Falls in Construction Campaign. Further information about the Mid-Atlantic Construction Safety Council can be found on their website, <http://www.macsc.org/>. Training materials on inspection of fall protection equipment are hosted on the training page of the Council at http://www.macsc.org/edu_training.htm.

MACSC Partners



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