SHARP START

August 19 — Being Tied Off Isn't Enough

Employee was using wrong tie off points on scaffolding.	**Supervisor told employee that he shouldn't be using the handrails on scaffolding as tie off point and directed him to correct tie off point which employee then started using.**

Fall protection only works...

...when every part of the system works together.

While observing work from scaffolding, an employee was found tied off to an improper anchor point. Although the employee was wearing the required fall protection, the connection point was not designed or approved to safely arrest a fall.

It's easy to think that clipping in anywhere is better than not clipping in at all, but fall protection systems are only as strong as the anchor supporting them. An improper tie-off point can fail during a fall, leaving the employee with little or no protection when it's needed most. Wearing the equipment is only one part of the process—selecting the correct anchor point is just as important.

This observation reminds us that safe work is about understanding the entire system, not just following one step. Before leaving the ground, take a moment to verify that your harness, lanyard, and anchor point are all compatible and designed for the task. A few extra seconds of verification can make the difference when it matters most.

Hazards

- Improper anchorage points
- Falls from elevation
- Failure to fall arrest systems
- False sense of security
- Serious injury or fatality
- Inadequate pre-job verification

Words of Wisdom

Wearing a harness doesn't stop a fall. A properly connected fall protection system does.

Pause and Think

- Do you know which anchor points are approved before starting work?
- Would your tie-off point safely support you during a fall?
- Have you ever assumed a structure was suitable without verifying it?
- Who should you ask if you're unsure whether an anchor point is approved?
- How can our crew verify proper tie-off locations before work begins?

Closing Thought

Fall protection is more than wearing the right equipment, it's using the entire system correctly. Before every job, verify that your anchor point is just as dependable as the harness you're wearing.