



August 26 — Don't Wait Until Someone Asks for Help

We were getting ready to set up our retractable from the floor above and looked at the length for reference and realized the retractable was not long enough for our job	We went to warehouse 4 and got the right retractable for the job.
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The safest time to find a problem...

...is before the work begins.

As a crew prepared to work at height, they began setting up a retractable lifeline from the level above. Before anyone climbed or connected to the system, they checked the required length and quickly realized the retractable was too short to provide continuous fall protection for the work they were about to perform.

Instead of trying to "make it work," they stopped the setup, obtained the correct equipment, and only began work after they had the proper fall protection in place.

Many fall incidents don't happen because workers ignore safety—they happen because someone convinces themselves that an existing setup is "close enough." Taking a few extra minutes to verify anchor points, lifeline length, equipment compatibility, and rescue considerations before leaving the ground eliminates unnecessary risk and prevents crews from having to improvise while exposed.

Good planning isn't about slowing the job down—it's about preventing situations where workers have to make unsafe decisions after work has already started.

Hazards

- Inadequate fall protection
- Insufficient lifeline length
- Improper equipment selection
- Working outside the protected area
- Increased fall exposure
- Rushing to make equipment "fit" the job

Words of Wisdom

The best time to discover your fall protection won't work is **before your feet leave the ground.**

Pause and Think

- Have you confirmed your fall protection equipment is appropriate for today's task?
- Will your lifeline allow you to work safely throughout the entire job?
- Are your anchor points, connectors, and equipment compatible?
- If your equipment doesn't fit the job, will you stop and get the correct equipment?
- What can you verify before climbing that could prevent an incident later?

Closing Thought

Fall protection starts long before you clip in. Taking a few minutes to verify you have the right equipment for the job can prevent dangerous shortcuts and ensure everyone goes home safely at the end of the day.