

Fall protection in construction: requirements for competent persons

Division 3, Subdivision M



Who can be a competent person?

A competent person for fall protection is someone who can identify existing and predictable fall hazards in the workplace and has the authority to take prompt measures to eliminate them.

The following Division 3, Subdivision M, rules apply to competent persons:

Fall protection systems criteria and practices

1926.502.(c)(4)(ii) Safety nets used for fall protection must be drop tested after they are installed unless a competent person certifies in writing that the net meets Division 3, Subdivision M safety net requirements. The certification, which must remain at the jobsite, must identify the net and include the certification date and the competent person's signature.

1926.502.(d)(19) Personal fall arrest systems and components subjected to an impact must be immediately removed from service and not used again until a competent person determines they are not damaged and safe to use again.

Safety monitoring systems

437-003-2502(3) When safety monitoring systems are used for fall protection, the employer must designate a competent person to be the safety monitor who must:

- Be able to recognize fall hazards
- Warn employees when it appears they are unaware of a fall hazard or are acting unsafe
- Be on the same working surface as the employees and see them working
- Be able to verbally communicate with the employees
- Not have any other responsibilities that could distract their attention from the monitoring function.

Note: safety monitoring systems are only allowed for roofing activities on low-sloped roofs (2:12 or less)



Training requirements

437-003-0503(1)(b) Employees who might be exposed to fall hazards must be trained by a competent person who understands:

- The nature of fall hazards in the work area
- The correct procedures for erecting, maintaining, disassembling, and inspecting the fall protection systems that will be used
- The use and operation of the fall protection systems that will be used such as:
 - Guardrails,
 - Personal fall arrest,
 - Safety nets,
 - Warning lines,
 - Safety monitoring,
 - Personal fall restraint,
 - Positioning devices, and
 - Other appropriate protection to be used.
- The role of each employee when a safety monitoring system is used
- The restrictions in the use of mechanical equipment during roofing work
- The correct procedures for handling and storing equipment and materials and erecting overhead protection
- Employees' roles in the fall protection work plan
- The fall protection requirements in Division 3, Subdivision M

Personal fall arrest systems

Appendix C Any substitution or change to a personal fall arrest system should be fully evaluated or tested by a competent person to determine that it meets Division 3, Subdivision M, requirements before the system is used.

The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to supplement the rules and provide best practices to employers.