

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



# ***Tool Box Talk***

*Week of April 12th, 2010*

## ***OSHA's Focus Four Inspections***

April's safety topic is "OSHA's Focus Four Inspections." We will now discuss examples of the Focus Four hazards - falls, struck-by, caught between, electrical hazards and provide insight on prevention at JJ White work sites.

Falls are the leading cause of deaths in the construction. Falls from as little as 4 to 6 feet can cause serious lost-time accidents and sometimes death. The issues of how to provide fall protection for employees at construction sites is a difficult one. There are so many different types of work and many different kinds of fall hazards that it is not possible to organize fall protection into an easy set of rules that fit all situations. OSHA reflects this difficulty in its rules that are found in different subparts of the Construction Standard. For example, fall protection standards are listed for work on scaffolds, man basket work with cranes, work on ladders, steel erection, etc. OSHA standards are minimal. Most often our customers and JJ White fall protection directives provide stricter requirements to enhance protection.

OSHA's general rule found in the beginning of the fall protection standard, 1926.501(b)(1) is; if an employee can fall six feet or more onto a lower level, fall protection must be provided. In most cases, a guardrail system, a personal fall arrest system, or a safety net system must be used. However, in some situations fences, barricades, covers, or a controlled access zone may be used; i.e. floor hole covers and fences around excavations.

Often the choice is a personal fall arrest system, PFAS. Worker wears a body harness that is fastened via a shock absorbing lanyard secured to an anchor point (5,000 pounds per each worker) so they cannot fall more than six feet. However, allowance for the total fall distance must be considered. The lanyard is 6 feet, the shock absorption of the rip-stitch lanyard is 3 ½ feet, add in a safety factor of 3 feet – results in a 12 ½ feet total - from the surface where the workers feet are. If there is not a 12 ½ feet clearance another choice such as a retractable device is needed.

Some examples where the choice of fall protection is needed are: working surface that has an unprotected edge, construction at the leading edge, when a worker may fall through a hole, working at the edge of an excavation, working above dangerous equipment, bricklaying and roofing work.

When working at elevations each situation most likely is different. Therefore careful fall protection planning will result in our most effective protection.