

OHBA Safety Pages: Anchor Points

What is an anchor point? An anchor point is an integral part of a fall protection system, and also a vital piece of equipment for anyone that works on roofs or other elevated surfaces. Anchor points are typically installed on a roof and connect lanyards and lifelines to a worker wearing a body harness.

Even though engineered anchor points are the safest and best solution, workers can also tie off to existing structures, which can present a problem.

How to pick an existing structure

The issue with picking an existing structure as an anchor point is that it is almost impossible to accurately calculate the load requirements for them. Other than a traditional I-beam, there are few things that qualify as a safe, OSHA-approved way to tie-off. In order for an existing structure to qualify as an anchor point, it must be able to withstand 5,000 pounds of force per person attached, or a safety factor of two (meaning it can withstand twice the force that would be applied in a fall). What's the problem? The problem is that just by eyeballing the job site, it is almost impossible to calculate the exact force these structures can withstand. Not only that, but most people on a job site have no clue about the OSHA requirements, so how on earth could they calculate the correct specifications for the force of a fall?

Unless you are a trained safety professional, it is almost impossible to choose a qualifying existing structure as an anchor point in the spur of the moment. That's why the only way to 100% exceed OSHA regulations and keep your workers safe is with a specialized engineered anchor point system.

How to pick an engineered system

Engineered anchor point systems are anchor points specifically made to exceed OSHA regulations and make sure that your workers can withstand a fall. There are temporary or permanent engineered anchor points.

Permanent Anchor Points

Permanent anchor points are ones that are made of galvanized or stainless steel and are permanently affixed to the structure. They are becoming more popular in recent years, especially on new home construction. Many builders offer homeowners permanent anchor points on their homes as a selling point. Permanent anchor points are easy to install and are cost-effective, and they can be useful even after the initial construction phase.

Portable anchor points

Portable anchor points are useful in situations where there is a temporary need to access a roof or other elevated structure. These portable, non-penetrating weighted anchor systems can be set up quickly and easily with common tools. They are ideal for temporary jobs or for solutions where permanent anchor points are not an option.

Selecting the right anchor point should always be planned and never done on the spur of the moment. The only way to exceed OSHA regulations and make sure your workers are completely safe is to use an engineered anchor point, and to make sure your workers know how to properly use it.



regulations or standards. The Members remain responsible for their own operations, safety practices and procedures and should consult with legal counsel as they deem appropriate.

The information we provide is not intended to include all possible safety measures and controls. In addition, the safety information we provide does not relieve the Members of its own duties and obligations with regard to safety concerns, nor does Oregon Home Builders Association guarantee to the Members or others that the Member's property, job sites and/or operations are safe, healthful, or in compliance with applicable laws,

SAFETY PAGE MEETING GUIDE

Topic: Anchor Points

Employer: _____ Project: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Shift: _____

Number in crew: _____ Number attending: _____

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:	Company:
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Supervisor's remarks: _____

Supervisor: _____ (Print) _____ (Signature)