



# MEL SAFETY INSTITUTE SHIFT BRIEFING

## Fall Protection – The Safety Monitor

Fatalities caused by falls from elevation are a leading cause of death for construction employees. In 2016, 370 of the 991 fatalities recorded were **preventative** falls from elevations.

For general industry workplaces, such as a Public Works or Utilities, employees must be protected from falling when walking/working on an unprotected side or edge that is 4 feet or more above a lower level. Examples of jobs that we do include: **[LIST JOBS or AREAS]**

There are 5 options to protect employees from falls from elevations. They include:

1. Redesigning the task so it can be completed from a lower height
2. Installing guardrails / covers / barriers
3. Using fall restraint and positioning devices
4. Using a fall arrest system
5. Designating a safety monitor

Today we are going to focus on the use of a safety monitor. A safety monitor provides the lowest level of protection for the employee and should only be used when guardrails and personal fall protection are not feasible.

A safety monitoring system can be used in two ways on **low slope roofs**, that is a roof having a slope of less than or equal to 4 inches of vertical rise for every 12 inches horizontal length (4:12). The two ways a safety monitoring system can be used are:

1. In conjunction with a warning line system that is erected on all sides of the elevated surface, at least 6 feet from the edge.
2. As the sole means of protection, without a warning line. This may only be used on roofs that are 50 feet or less in width. **[LIST BUILDINGS THAT YOU OWN / WORK ON LESS THAN 50 FT. WIDE]**

The safety monitor must be a competent person as defined by OSHA, and meet the following requirements:

- Educated and trained to recognize fall hazards
- Shall warn the employee when it appears that the employee is unaware of a fall hazard or is acting in an unsafe manner
- Be on the same walking / working surface and within visual sight of the employee being monitored.
- Be close enough to communicate orally with the employee
- Shall not have other responsibilities which could take the monitor's attention from the monitoring function

Mechanical equipment shall not be used or stored in areas where safety monitoring systems are being used to monitor employees engaged in roofing operations on low-slope roofs.

Employees, other than an employee working on the low-sloped roof or an employee covered by a fall protection plan, shall not be allowed in an area where an employee is being protected by a safety monitor.

**Are there any questions?**

This lesson plan is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.