



# SAFETY PAGES

March 2021

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Remember if you have any safety suggestions, questions or concerns please let us know. In addition, if you have a safety topic that you would like covered in a Safety Page for training purposes let us know and we will develop one. Topics to our inventory of monthly Safety Pages are continually being added.



The OHBA/SAIF Safety Pages are an ongoing series of pages, designed to provide a selection of safety topics each month to OHBA members. Please use these pages to add to (or start) either a Safety Committee file or manual for your company. Some of the Safety Pages will be on general topics and others will be for Owner/Supervisors. The Owner/Supervisor Safety Pages will be on topics based more on compliance or suggested management safety practices.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Oregon Home Builders Association Safety Committee's purpose is to provide safety guidelines, information and resources to help our members work more safely and reduce jobsite accidents. Full and active monthly participation in safety meetings using the OHBA Safety Committee's agendas, topics and checklists will only meet safety committee requirements. It remains your responsibility to comply with all aspects of safety rules and regulations.

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# OHBA Safety Pages: Anchor Points

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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 connects 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 in 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.



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Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

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# OHBA Safety Pages: Train Your Brain

## For Safer decisions, pause and think

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Experts tell us there are at least two ways to look at every problem:

- We can rely on our automatic, involuntary response, which is influenced by intuition and unconscious bias.
- We can engage in deliberate, analytical problem solving.

This is sometimes called “fast” and “slow” thinking, and there are advantages and disadvantages to both. For instance, if we’re about to be run over by a speeding taxi, the best response is to leap to safety. But if we’re surprised by a sudden fire, the proper response requires conscious thought.

Making safe decisions often requires that we slow down and think deliberately. This helps to counter any biases, such as assuming company leaders always know what’s right or sticking with the way things have always been done. Consider asking the following:

- What are other ways to perform this task?
- What alternatives are the safest?
- Do we have enough information to make an informed decision?
- Is any key information missing?
- Why are we doing it this way?

The following techniques also can help build resilience and increase performance, focus, and memory while reducing stress, anxiety, and fatigue.

### **Switch on**

Ask simple questions to activate deliberate thinking:

- What’s changed since my last shift?
- How would someone else see this?
- Does this mean I’m safe?

### **PAUSE before acting**

Perceive the situation.

Allow at least 10 seconds.

Understand before taking action.

Seek new solutions.

Evaluate if things are going as expected.

### **Take a walk**

Focused walking, such as in a labyrinth, can induce a contemplative or meditative state of mind.

### **Prime for safety**

Conduct a job hazard analysis or pre-task plan.

### **Take care of yourself**

Reducing fatigue, eating a balanced diet, and managing stress can increase our capacity for deliberate thinking.

### **Unplug from screens**

Powering down electronics provides time to reset, refresh, and refocus.

### **Practice mindfulness**

Follow these steps for five minutes each day:

1. Sit with your back straight.
2. Take a deep breath and close your eyes.
3. Notice your natural breathing pattern but don’t change it.
4. As your mind wanders, bring your awareness back to your breathing.

Credit: Saif.com



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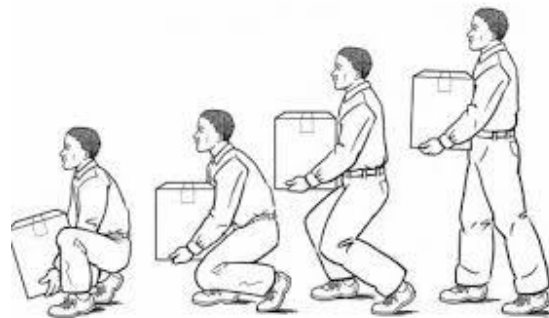
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# OHBA Safety Pages: Lifting and Carrying

**Introduction:** Back injuries are caused by lifting and carrying heavy materials, working in awkward positions, and bending often to lift materials off the ground. Construction has one of the highest rates of back injuries of any industry.



## **Main Message:**

- Whenever possible, use mechanical equipment like a dolly to move heavy objects horizontally.
- Never try to lift an item weighing over 50 pounds by yourself.
- Plan your lifts; make sure the path is clear and you are facing the direction of travel before lifting.
- While lifting, tuck in your chin to keep your neck straight, and keep your back as straight as possible.
- Lift with the leg muscles, which can help protect your back.
- Ask for help with heavy or awkward objects.
- Avoid twisting your body while carrying an object.
- Coordinate and practice team lifting before using it for moving objects.



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# OHBA Safety Pages: Hearing Protection

## Hearing Protection is for Everyone

Why? Everyone is exposed to loud noise at some time in their lives—even babies! Lawn mowing, fitness classes, truck and tractor pulls, airplanes, table saws, rock concerts, snowmobiles—all these environments can be too loud. The decibel is a unit used to express sound level, and “loud noise” means sounds that are more than 80 decibels. Loud noise can be very hazardous to your health and particularly to your hearing. Over time, exposure to loud sounds on a regular basis can result in permanent hearing loss. You often don’t know you have the hearing problem until it is too late to do anything about it. Sudden, VERY loud noises, like explosions, can cause instant hearing loss.



HEARING  
PROTECTION  
REQUIRED



AREA DE  
PROTECCION  
DE LOS OIDOS



**Why is hearing loss a problem?** Imagine being cut off from all the things that are important to you—friends, family, TV, radio, MUSIC! It’s not a comforting thought. When you’re born, your hearing is as good as it will ever be, so you need start protecting it as soon as you can. Hearing loss due to loud noise is preventable, but it is NOT treatable once you have it.

**So what kind of hearing protection should I wear?** Either earplugs or earmuffs are fine. For noise exposure outside of the workplace, most types sold in safety stores or hardware stores will block out enough noise to protect your hearing. Pick a style that you like the look of and feels comfortable to wear.

**Really, what’s the BEST hearing protector?** The best hearing protector is one that you will want to wear for the entire time you’re exposed to noise.

**How should they fit?** Earplugs should fit snugly in your ear canal and someone looking at you should have a hard time seeing them. If they stick out too far, they’re not blocking sound. Earmuffs should fit close to your head, with no gaps. There is another style of hearing protector called the “banded” earplug—it’s an earplug (that can go into the ear canal or sit over it) on a headband.

**How long do they last?** Foam (“disposable”) earplugs will last for about 10 wearings; other earplugs will last about 1 year. The custom molded type, made of medical silicone, will last about 3-4 years. Earmuffs will last about 4-5 years, but you must replace the cuff (the part that sits right on your skin) every year. The oils and sweat from your skin will make the plastic of the cuff deteriorate.



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