

Methods to Reduce Fall Hazards

Fall hazards exist because of the need for workers to perform particular maintenance tasks at heights. Protecting that worker from the fall hazard can take one or a combination of the following forms. In order to make the selection process easier, the following Hierarchy of Controls has been developed to progress from most reliable to least reliable:

1. Elimination of the Hazard

This maybe the best and most cost-effective approach, in some situations, because it involves removing the hazard from the workplace. Discussions with your work team about equipment location and procedures are essential in considering this approach.

2. Prevention / Installation of Passive Fall Protection Systems

The use of Passive Fall Protection Systems, such as guardrails around unprotected edges, work platforms and covers, are usually the next best choice since they isolate the hazard from the general work area and eliminate the risk of workers not complying with procedures.

3. Engineering Controls

Engineering controls, such as equipment design changes or use of different equipment or techniques, involve physical changes to the work area or process that effectively minimize an individual's exposure to fall hazards.

4. Administrative Controls

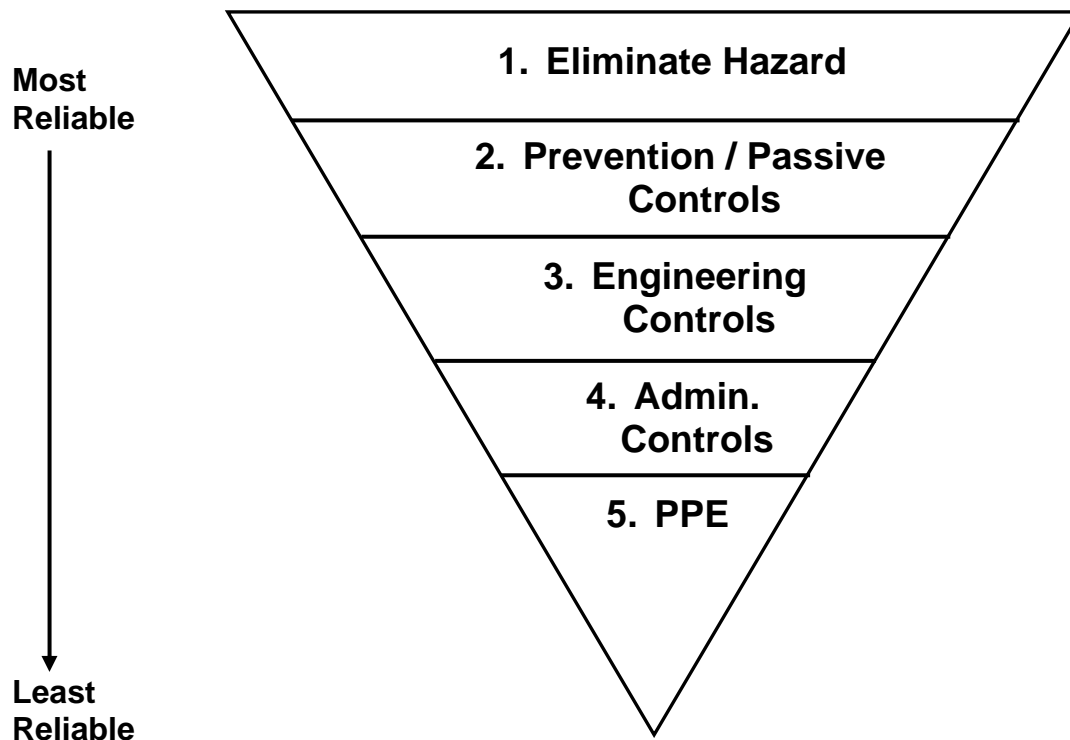
Administrative Controls can be effective to limit exposure for personnel, such as modification of current work procedures, post appropriate signage or restrict access to areas with potential hazards with policy changes.

5. Personal Protective Systems/Equipment (PPE)

Effective utilization of Personal Protective Systems/Equipment (PPE), such as harness, lanyard, SRL device, anchor point, can be implemented to limit exposure for personnel. PPE requires worker training, equipment inspection (and replacement) as well as proper anchorages identified. PPE can be utilized when engineering controls do not eliminate hazards or Administrative Controls are not sufficient or as a backup system.

Hierarchy of Health and Safety Controls

There are five types of fall hazard controls, ranked from most to least reliable:



Whenever performance of any task would allow a worker to fall a distance of six feet or more, or any distance where the likelihood of a serious or fatal injury exists, the hazards of falling must be identified, evaluated and controlled based on the hierarchy of controls.