



When to Throw Out Your Harnesses or Lanyards

This is an excellent topic and one that has many varying opinions. Initially, one would think that we first need to go to the manufacturer to see what their recommendation is when it comes to discarding harnesses or lanyards. Many of our vendors use five years as a general rule of thumb, but the reality is you **MUST** have a Competent Person (or Qualified Person) be the deciding factor on whether that fall protection item needs to be discarded (or repaired, in the case of some expensive SRLs and sealed block retrieval units).

While Conney Safety does indeed provide “Competent Person” training in fall protection, helping customers learn how to properly inspect their equipment, there is no law that requires employers to send their workers through such a class (although I feel it is good knowledge and documentation to have).

Our customers should indeed review the inspection guidelines for the given brand of fall protection PPE they use and make sure they are documenting their “Competent Person” inspections on (at least) an annual basis. Believe it or not, the ANSI Standard for Construction recommends a 6-month Competent Person schedule (but OSHA does not require this schedule). It is imperative that **ALL** employees who use fall protection PPE know how to inspect their PPE on a daily basis (realizing this isn’t being documented).

Conney Safety also offers inspection services to those customers who prefer to have this done third-party (they either mail us their PPE to inspect and document or we travel to their location to document it on-site). The liability for not properly

inspecting fall protection equipment by a Competent Person is far too great to overlook.

Just remember that manufacturer “life expectancy guidelines” are only guidelines and it is very common for some PPE to wear out in only a year or two (depending on the abuse the PPE takes by the nature of the workers activities). Welding slag, chemicals, sun, sharp edges, improper storage, etc. all take their abuse on the products we sell. A good training program (which we conduct) can help you better understand how to take care of you investment and save you money in the long run.

07/14/16