



# WisCon Words of Wisdom

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## July Awareness Topics

All month long:

[Vehicle Theft Prevention](#)

[National Extreme Heat Awareness](#)

## Upcoming: Safe + Sound Week

Get Ready! Safe + Sound Week is just around the corner, August 11-17, 2025. This nationwide initiative, led by OSHA, highlights the importance of workplace safety and health programs. It's a fantastic opportunity for organizations like yours to recognize their achievements in safety, educate employees, and foster a strong culture of health and well-being. If you haven't, start thinking about ways your company can participate!

## We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Let us know [here](#).

## Staying Safe When Tornadoes Strike

Wisconsin averages 23 tornadoes each year, with peak season from April through August.

Preparedness starts with a plan. Identify safe shelter locations—ideally a basement or underground storm shelter. If unavailable, seek small, interior rooms or hallways on the lowest floor. Avoid doors, windows, and exterior walls. Stay in the center of the room, and steer clear of large, open spaces like gymnasiums or auditoriums, which are prone to collapse.

### Accountability at Work

Workplaces should:

- Track who is in the building during emergencies.
- Use and regularly test alarm systems.
- Ensure warnings reach non-English speakers/readers and people with disabilities.
- Account for everyone using a roster or headcount in the shelter.
- Assign and train workers for specific emergency duties, with backups designated.

### Training and Practice

Even a strong plan fails without practice:

- Hold regular tornado drills to ensure everyone knows what to do.
- Wisconsin's annual statewide tornado drill, facilitated by [ReadyWisconsin](#)
- Update your plans based on drills or real incidents.

### Understanding Tornado Alerts

- Tornado Watch: Conditions are favorable. Stay alert, check supplies, and monitor news.
- Tornado Warning: A tornado is spotted or indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately.

Your local emergency management office can provide details on your community's warning system, including sirens.

## The End of WisCon Public Sector Consultation

At this time, WisCon's Public Sector Consulting has been put on an indefinite pause. The grant funding provided through the Wisconsin Department of Health Services ended with the close of the 2025 state fiscal year. We are thankful to have been provided with the opportunity to serve public sector employees on issues related to safety and health. We would welcome future opportunities to provide this service again should funding become available. We may continue to provide limited off-site compliance assistance depending on consultant availability.

# Fall Protection For Roofing Crews

Roofing is one of the most physically demanding jobs in construction. The work is challenging, and when you add the risk of working at heights, it can become downright dangerous. Falls are a leading cause of serious injury and fatalities in the construction industry, but fall protection is one of the most effective ways to prevent these accidents.

OSHA has clear guidelines when it comes to fall protection for construction workers. Last fiscal year, the [Duty To Have Fall Protection](#) standard was the number one most frequently cited OSHA standard. For residential construction, 29 CFR 1926.501(b) (13) requires fall protection if you're working 6 feet or more off the ground. For residential roofing, there are some specifics you should be aware of:

- **Sloped Roofs** (8-in-12 or less and under 25 feet to the lower eaves): If your roof isn't super steep and isn't exceptionally high at the eaves, you might have some flexibility. In these cases, a "qualified person" can create a written, site-specific fall protection plan if traditional methods just aren't feasible or could create more danger. This plan is crucial for outlining alternative safety measures.
- **Steeper or Higher Roofs:** For steeper pitches or greater heights, you'll generally need more robust fall protection in place.

Fall protection is essentially your safety net—literally. The following are a few key tools and systems that will help keep you safe when working on the roof:

- **Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS):** This is your most critical piece of gear. A PFAS includes:
  - **Full-Body Harness:** This isn't just any belt; it's designed to distribute the force of a fall across your entire body, minimizing injury. Make sure it fits snugly and is adjusted correctly.
  - **Lanyard:** This connects your harness to an anchor. Always use one with a shock absorber—it's designed to reduce the jolt if you fall.
  - **Anchor Point:** This is where you connect your lanyard. It needs to be incredibly secure—strong enough to hold you if you slip. You'll find reusable roof anchors that are easy to install. A good rule of thumb is to place anchors every 8 to 10 feet, and about 6 to 8 feet from gable ends, to prevent dangerous pendulum swings if you fall.

- **Rope Grab:** If you're using a vertical lifeline, a rope grab moves along the line and locks in place during a fall.
- **Guardrail Systems:** These act as a physical barrier around the edges of the roof. They can be temporary setups and are built to specific heights and strengths. On steeper roofs, you'll also see toe boards to keep tools and materials from sliding off.
- **Safety Net Systems:** While less common on typical residential jobs, these are strong mesh systems placed below your work area to catch you if you fall.
- **Warning Line Systems:** You'll mostly see these on lower-slope roofs. They're basically ropes or chains that create a visual and physical boundary to warn you about unprotected edges. They usually go hand-in-hand with a safety monitor.
- **Safety Monitoring Systems:** This isn't equipment, but a procedure. On low-slope roofs, a trained person will keep an eye on you and warn you if you're getting too close to a fall hazard.

Fall protection isn't just about wearing the right gear—it's also about using it correctly. Here are a few best practices to ensure your safety:

- **Inspect Your Gear Daily:** Before heading up to the roof, make sure your harness, lanyard, and other fall protection equipment are in good working condition. Look for signs of wear, such as cuts or fraying in the lanyard, and check that your harness fits properly.
- **Always Tie Off:** Never work on a roof without being tied off to a secure anchor point unless you're protected by guardrails or safety nets. Even if it feels like a quick task, accidents can happen fast.
- **Work as a Team:** Communication and teamwork are key to preventing falls. Make sure your crew knows how to use fall protection properly, and don't hesitate to ask for help if something doesn't seem right.
- **Follow Site-Specific Plans:** If a qualified person creates a written fall protection plan for your job site, be sure to follow it to the letter. It's designed to keep everyone safe.

Staying safe on the job is paramount. When you use the right equipment and follow safety protocols, you ensure that you and your crew can finish the job without risking injury. Take the time to gear up, tie off, and work safely.

Wisconsin Safety and Health Consultation Program

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