



## ENERGY ABSORBING LANYARDS

Their Uses & Hazards



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**ENERGY ABSORBING LANYARDS** are the most commonly used fall arrest system. They connect a worker to an anchor point with a combination of snaphooks, carabiners, webbing, rope and energy absorbers. These components can be configured in various ways to produce hundreds of different types, lengths and models of lanyards. This article covers common varieties of energy absorbing lanyards (lanyards) and non-energy-absorbing lanyards (simple lanyards) as well as their uses and associated hazards.

Lanyards consist of a length of webbing, cable or rope with an energy absorber and snaphook on one end and a snaphook or carabiner on the other end. The energy absorber end connects to the dorsal D-ring of a full body harness and the opposite end connects to an anchorage. When anchoring a lanyard, workers should leave enough slack to allow work to be performed while limiting the potential free fall distance.

Simple lanyards consist of a line with hardware connections on opposite ends. They are usually 6' long but can be ordered in almost any length. Simple lanyards are identified by the absence of an energy absorber. The only energy absorbing qualities simple lanyards have comes from the line material itself. Consequently, simple lanyards should not be used for fall arrest. Most regulatory agencies specify that a worker shall not be subjected to more than 1,800 lbs. (8 kN) of impact force during a fall. Simple lanyards do not limit or

control impact forces and, for this reason, should not be used for fall arrest. Simple lanyards can be used for fall restraint and work positioning applications.

