

SUBJECT: Requirements for Boatswain's Chairs and Descent-Only Equipment

Purpose: To set forth guidelines and enforcement criteria for boatswain's chairs and descent-only equipment.

Cancellation: This directive cancels STD 3-11.3A, dated October 17, 2006.

Scope: This instruction applies division wide.

References:

- A. 1910.21(f), contain definitions applicable to boatswain's chairs used in both General Industry and Construction.
 - 1. A "boatswain's chair" is defined in 1910.21(f)(2) as "a seat supported by slings attached to a suspended rope, designed to accommodate one worker in a sitting position."
 - 2. A "scaffold" is defined by 1910.21(f)(27) as "any temporary elevated platform and its supporting structure used for supporting worker or materials, or both."
- B. 1910.28(j) and 1926.452(o) contain nearly identical requirements for the use of boatswain's chairs. In addition, applicable sections of the general requirements for scaffolds from 1910.28(a) and 1926.451(f) apply to this equipment.
- C. Minnesota Rule 5205.0065 contains requirements for suspension lines, outrigger beams or thrust-outs, lifelines on single point suspension scaffolds and broken wire safeties.
- D. Minnesota Rule 5205.0730 contains requirements for window cleaning operation, building maintenance, or a combination of both, that is performed on the inside or outside of any building.

ACTION:

- A. Cite the applicable section of 5205.0730, 1926.452(o), or 1910.28(j) for boatswain's chair hazards covered by the vertical standard for the operation being conducted.
- B. Cite the requirements of 1910.28(a) or 1926.451(f) for general hazards, e.g., cite 1910.28(a)(18) for use of boatswain's chairs in high wind. When boatswain's chairs and scaffolds are used on construction sites, cite the construction standards, 1926.452(o) and 1926.451(f).
- C. When an employee is exposed to a fall hazard while using a boatswain's chair for window washing or building maintenance, cite Minnesota Rule 5205.0730.

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For the MNOSHA Management Team

Distribution: OSHA Compliance and WSC Director

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