Work at Height - Emergency Rescue transcript

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Hello
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my name's Toby and I work in the City of London Corporation's Health and Safety
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Team
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where it is our job to help keep people safe who are working here
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in the business and financial center known as the Square Mile.
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In the short video
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we're going to be looking at emergency rescue arrangements that need to be in
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place
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when people have fallen or become stuck whilst working at height.
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There are many activities that involve working at height
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such as being on a roof, working in a cradle or cherry picker
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on scaffolding or even cleaning windows.
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In the first instance the law requires you to do everything you reasonably can
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to prevent someone falling at all
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but this may not always be feasible. Having accepted this risk
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then you must still try to minimize the distance in consequence of a fall
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but additionally plan for how you get that person back to safety afterwards.
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This is known as your rescue plan and the details of this need to be just as
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specific as planning the work in the first place.
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It is important that your rescue plan is suitable and works
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so that those that need to be rescued can be so quickly and safely.
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Unfortunately we find that that's not always the case.
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Emergency rescue situations may come about for a number of different but
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foreseeable reasons
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cradle uses common in the city and they can seize or
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stop working or a person may simply become unexpectedly unconscious or
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unwell whilst in an awkward location or a person may even fall whilst in a land yard
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and then remain suspended. If a person is suspended for even a short amount of
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time
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this may result in a life-threatening condition called suspension trauma.
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When planning the rescue arrangements it might be useful to ask yourself the
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following questions:
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How you know if someone is in need of rescue, how quickly can you get to them,
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how quickly can you get them to a safe place and what equipment and training do
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you need to make
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all this actually happen. There are many different types of
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rescue systems and this short video cannot cover them all and provides only
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one filmed example.
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Ultimately, you need to be confident that what you choose is appropriate for how you
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intend to use it.
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Some systems even allow for self rescue provided the person is still conscious.
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You will need to ensure that your risk assessment considers what level of rescue
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you might actually need.
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Once the planning has been done in the best thing you can do is to turn it into
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written
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emergency rescue plan that you can communicate to everyone who needs to know it,
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from managers to contractors and site security teams.
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A critical mistake that we often see is just to rely on emergency services to
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carry out

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any rescue that might be needed whilst there may be some circumstances where
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this is appropriate
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the initial duty to rescue lies with those undertaking the work.
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You must have a plan for rescuing them yourself as the emergency services may
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not be able to attend
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or assist. Here are some specific issues that you might need to consider when
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planning a rescue.
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Priority should always be given to minimizing the risk of a fall
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even during a rescue operation don't just rely on direct rescue by rope
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as the first option, if safer options can be planned that keep the risks of a
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rescuer falling low. Have you thought about
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exactly how the rescuer or the rescue team what actually gets safely to a
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person stuck at height.
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If you're using vehicles such as cherry pickers for rescue
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then can they reach all of the areas where people will be working.
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Is the ground even able to support them and do the vehicles have the necessary
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reach.
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Can a cradle safely lower all the way to the ground if necessary.
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Are there any issues with passing traffic obstructing rescue
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or a risk of collision with other vehicles.
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Consider also the safety of the rescuer, good rescue planning will ideally avoid
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putting
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anyone else at risk. It's usually preferable to lower or raise a casualty
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to safety remotely
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rather than relying on anyone else to do the rescue directly.
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And if you're going to rely on anchor points for rescue equipment
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you need to make sure that they are either unquestionably reliable
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or can handle the additional loads imposed upon them during the rescue
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such as the weight of the casualty and the rescuer. Are these anchor points in the right
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place for rescue
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and position where any rescue equipment such as ropes can be safely used.
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These are questions that should be answered in advance
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not during the intensity of a rescue operation and finally
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you don't want to be thinking about whether or not rescue equipment is in
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good condition
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when you are already in that emergency situation, it's better to have a system of
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regular maintenance and inspection checks in place
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so that the equipment is ready to be deployed immediately if needed.
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So, when you're considering work at height
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make sure you've got a suitable and written emergency rescue plan
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in place that's been communicated to everyone before you let the work go
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ahead.