



ANSI/ISEA 121-2023:

FIVE BIG FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW



ANSI/ISEA 121-2023: FIVE BIG FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Reviewed and updated in 2023 to account for new research and feedback from the field, ANSI/ISEA 121-2023 draws a clear line between proper tethering systems and DIY solutions like duct tape and rope.

Here's a look at the five most important things you absolutely positively need to know about the "dropped objects standard".



ONE: THIS IS A TOOL STANDARD FOR DROPPED OBJECT PREVENTION

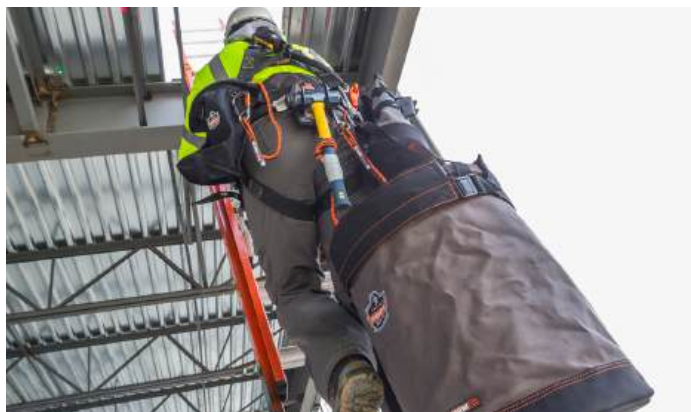
Think of ANSI/ISEA 121-2023 as the dropped object equivalent to ANSI Z359 for fall protection equipment. It creates a formal distinction of what constitutes a proper tethering system but DOES NOT specify proper use of the equipment or what needs to be tethered and when. Proper use of the equipment is specified by the manufacturer. When a worker needs to tether and what they need to tether is specified by a company or a regulatory body.

TWO: IT COVERS FOUR CATEGORIES OF EQUIPMENT

ANSI/ISEA 121-2023 is a standard that consists of design, testing, performance and labeling requirements for tool tethering systems and containers used to transport and secure tools and equipment at heights.

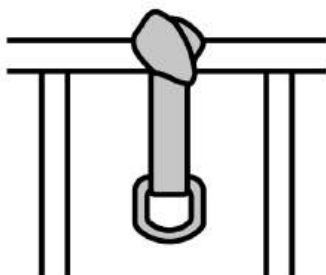
The four categories of equipment covered in this standard are:

- Anchor Attachments
- Tool Attachments
- Tool Tethers
- Containers



TOOL ATTACHMENTS

Retrofit attachment points **installed onto tools and equipment**, allowing them to be tethered



ANCHOR ATTACHMENTS

Retrofit attachment points **installed onto the structure or the worker themselves** to provide an anchor point or tethering



TOOL TETHERS

Lanyards that connect tools to an anchor point



CONTAINERS

Bags and buckets used to transport tools and equipment to and from at-heights work zones



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FOUR: ... BUT OSHA IS WATCHING

Some folks think tool tethering isn't required because OSHA hasn't specifically mandated it. Here's why that logic doesn't hold:

OSHA **does** require employers to address falling object hazards—across General Industry (1910.23, 1910.28) and Construction (1926.451, 1926.501, 1926.759) standards.

Prevention > Protection. Hard hats and debris nets help—but preventing drops in the first place is the gold standard.

ANSI/ISEA 121 defines the equipment that solves this problem—making it easier for OSHA to hold companies accountable under the **General Duty Clause**.

THREE: THIS IS A VOLUNTARY CONSENSUS TOOL TETHERING STANDARD, NOT A REGULATION...

ANSI is a private, non-profit that oversees the development of voluntary standards in the U.S. ANSI/ISEA 121 was developed by the International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA), representing safety gear manufacturers.

Voluntary standards like this:

- Provide testing/design guidance for manufacturers.
- Help safety pros set **best practices** on the job.
- Do not legally require adoption.

FIVE: IT'S A U.S. STANDARD WITH WORLDWIDE IMPACT

Right now, there's no international equivalent to ANSI/ISEA 121.

Countries like Australia, Brazil, and those in the EU mandate protection from dropped objects but don't spell out equipment requirements.

That's likely to change.

ANSI/ISEA 121-2023 is poised to become a global model, spurring standards development in other countries. And as always, we'll be on the front lines helping shape what's next.





ANSI/ISEA 121-2023: A NEW STANDARD IN AT-HEIGHTS SAFETY

From our pioneering line of **Squids® Equipment and Tool Lanyards + Attachments** to helping craft ANSI/ISEA 121-2023 to establish design, testing and labeling requirements for dropped object prevention solutions, we're proud to lead the way. But there's still work to do, and it can't be done without your help.

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