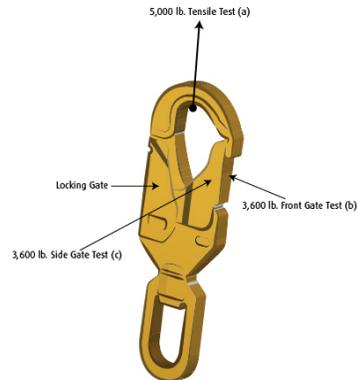


## TOOLBOX TALK #30

### FALL PROTECTION MISUSE – REBAR SNAP HOOKS

Rebar snap hooks, also referred to as pelican hooks, large gate or form hooks, are frequently used because they are large and can connect to many objects. Just as with other components, rebar snap hooks are tested and approved for use only in specific configurations. When used outside those configurations, a risk of failure exists.

Rebar snap hooks are not tested in the same way they are used. For example, the larger snap hooks are not tested for bending and some manufacturers are now marking certain parts of the hook with “DO NOT LOAD” to illustrate when loading is outside the equipment’s intended use. When these snap hooks are attached to vertical members, such as guardrail and scaffolding posts, the potential exists for bending and loading of the area marked as not to be loaded. This misuse is common for two main reasons:



- 1) This type of equipment is often preferable because it eliminates the need for an additional anchorage connector. While convenient, this can be dangerous since a worker’s anchorage of choice may be of questionable strength or could cause the snap hook to be loaded inappropriately.
- 2) These snap hooks are designed larger to capture larger structures. However, those structures are not necessarily directly over the worker using the personal fall arrest system (PFAS). Testing has not been performed along any diagonal oblique angles that would commonly occur when using hooks on vertical scaffold members, vertical rebar or ladder side rails. In accordance with standards, these snap hooks are tested to load the major axis of the hook and to load across the gate and down onto the gate.

Ideally, to mitigate this misuse issue, the anchorage connector D-ring should be larger than the snap hook to avoid side loading of the snap hook, but this is nearly impossible to achieve. Employers should consider using a small anchor strap (choker strap) to achieve better geometry.

Several factors should be considered if a rebar snap hook will be used. Is it a pre-2009 snap hook with gate strength of 220/350 lbs, instead of upgraded 3600 lb gate strength? What is the strongest part of the hook? In some configurations, the hooks will have two stress points. Those points should align with the strongest points on the hook. In this manner, the competent person must consider anchor structure, hook configuration and potential load path in the event of a fall.