

**BELL SYSTEM PRACTICES**  
**Outside Plant Construction**  
**and Maintenance**

**SECTION G86.240.3**  
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**AT&T Co Standard**

## FABRIC SAFETY STRAPS

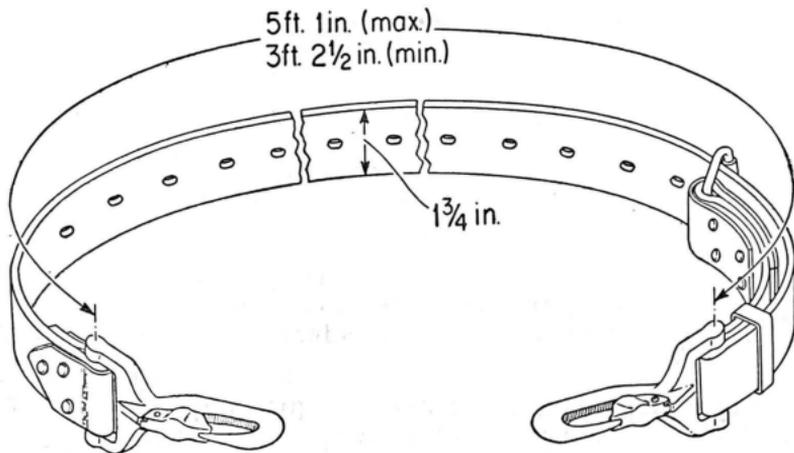
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### 1. GENERAL

1.01 This section covers the care and maintenance of fabric safety straps. It has been reissued to include a new type of fabric safety strap, to **prohibit** the use of two or more safety straps attached together for added length, and to specify a new method of attaching the safety strap to the body belt when the other end of the strap is fastened to the suspension strand. Also the cleaning agents have been changed.

1.02 Fabric safety straps are of two types, the B (cotton) and the C (nylon). Both straps are made of neoprene impregnated fabric, vulcanized so as to provide a well bonded multiple-ply construction having no raw edges. The center plies have a distinguishing color, to indicate when worn straps should be removed from service.

1.03 Fabric safety straps are equipped with drop forged snap hooks and tongue type buckles and are available in one size only (see illustration).



## 2. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

2.01 Fabric safety straps may be injured seriously and rendered unsafe for use if heavy objects, such as trucks, trailers, reels, pole derrick members, or other heavy equipment are allowed to run over or fall on the strap. Care should be exercised to see that this does not occur. If it should occur, the strap should be removed from service immediately and given a thorough examination for defects. The important defects to look for are:

- (a) Broken, cut, or torn outer fibers and
- (b) Broken inner fibers. Defects are usually found in the section at which the injury occurred. The strap should be examined in short sections and if a soft, flexible section is found the strap should not be used. Breakage of the inner fibers is indicated by limpness and flexibility of the strap.

2.02 Before climbing a pole, adjust the length of the safety strap and see that the tongue of the buckle is properly seated in the desired hole in the strap.

2.03 Place strap around pole so that the strap rests flat against the pole surface. Straps should not have turns or twists.

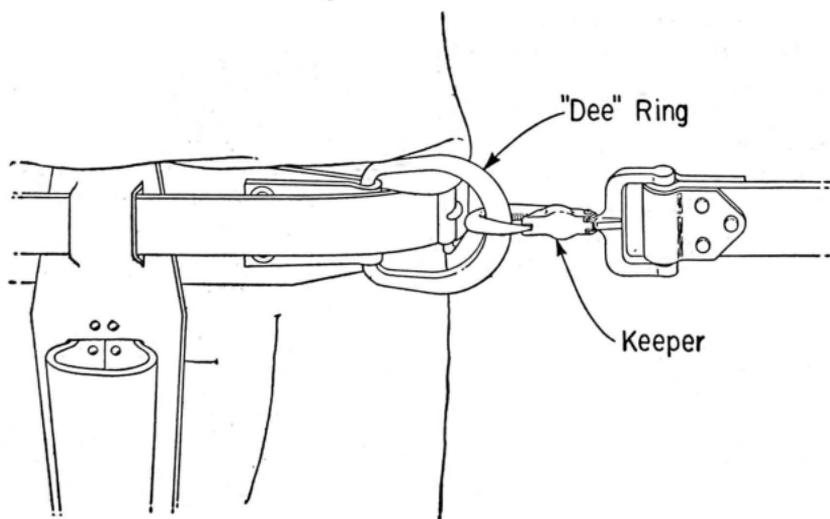
2.04 A workman may improve his security by placing the strap around the pole at a point directly above a cross-arm, strand, pole step, or other secure attachment which is to remain in place while he is on the pole. Do not place strap around an insulator pin, a bolt, or other insecure attachment. Do not place a strap around a pole within one foot of the top<sup>7</sup> of the pole unless there is a crossarm or cable attachment on the pole above the strap.

2.05 **Two or more safety straps shall not be attached together for additional length.** If one safety strap can not be lengthened sufficiently to reach around a large tree or other objects, time should be taken to procure a rope sling or the method of doing the work changed.

2.06 A workman working on an aerial platform or an extension ladder that is securely supported by a suspension strand or other support may use one of the following methods to secure himself with his body belt and safety strap. Attach one snap hook to a Dee ring, and either

- (a) pass the free end of the safety strap between two rungs and around one side rail, and engage the snap hook in **the other** Dee ring or
- (b) pass the free end of the safety strap around a securely fastened rung and engage the snap hook in **the other** Dee ring, or
- (c) pass the free end of the safety strap over the suspension strand so as to loop the strand and engage the snap hook in **the other** Dee ring, or
- (d) pass the free end **through the other Dee ring** and engage the snap hook on the suspension strand. (Use this method when working on an aerial platform.)

2.07 **SEE THAT THE SNAP HOOK AND DEE RING ARE PROPERLY ENGAGED. DO NOT RELY ON FEEL OR ON THE CLICK OF THE KEEPER** in the snap hook when attaching a safety strap to a Dee ring as an indication that the fastening is secure; workmen shall **LOOK and KNOW** that the snap hook is properly engaged before placing their weight on the strap. Always have keeper of snap hook on safety strap away from the body when engaged in the Dee ring, as shown in the following illustration.



2.08 The following are additional precautions :

- (a) Exercise care when working aloft so that the keeper of the snap hook is not depressed accidentally by contact with wires, strand, crossarm braces, guys, and other attachments, or by crossarms, guard arms, cable cars, etc., that may be supported on the safety strap in the course of performing certain work operations.
- (b) Safety straps should never be used as a means of riding suspension strand.
- (c) Never use an improvised substitute of rope, wire, etc., for a safety strap.
- (d) Do not punch extra holes in a safety strap.
- (e) While wearing a safety strap which is not in use, both ends of the safety strap should be snapped into the same Dee ring. Care should be exercised to see that the safety strap does not catch on pole steps, and other attachments when climbing poles.
- (f) When climbing past another workman who has his safety strap in place around the pole, exercise care to avoid dragging the climber gaffs over his strap and cutting it.
- (g) Avoid swinging rapidly around a pole in a safety strap.
- (h) Do not throw or drop a safety strap.
- (i) Exercise care to prevent damage to a safety strap from heat by contact with or placing it near a splicer's furnace, pot of hot solder, torch, or hot soldering copper.
- (j) Do not stand near a fire with a safety strap suspended from the body belt.

### 3. INSPECTION ROUTINE

3.01 Each employee, when receiving a safety strap, and at least once a week thereafter, should inspect the strap in accordance with Part 4 so that he may detect any fault that may have developed.

3.02 Each employee should at all times assume the responsibility for determining that his safety strap is in good condition.

3.03 The supervisor should inspect safety straps periodically.

### 4. INSPECTION OF FABRIC SAFETY STRAP

4.01 The safety strap should be examined to determine its condition as suggested. If any of the following conditions are found to exist or if the condition of the strap is such that there is any doubt as to its safety, it should be exchanged

at once for one in good condition, in accordance with the Company's established routine. Fabric safety straps should never be subjected to proof load tests.

**4.02 Visual Inspection of Safety Straps:** The important conditions to look for are:

- (a) Worn fabric, as indicated by the colored ply. When two outer layers of fabric are worn through, the colored ply can be seen. Straps should be removed from service as soon as a colored ply becomes visible.
- (b) Cuts, nicks, punctures, etc., that would affect the strength of the strap. The edges of the strap should be inspected carefully.
- (c) Loose, broken, or missing rivets, or rivets with excessive wear.
- (d) Broken or badly worn steel guard on ends of safety strap.
- (e) Defective buckle, or defective snap hook, and poor action of the keeper on the snap hook. The keeper should work freely without excessive side play, and should close securely under the spring tension.
- (f) Charred spots on the surface of the fabric, such as might have been caused by flames, contacts with hot solder pots, furnaces, hot soldering coppers, heated ducts and pipes. If burns are on the flat surfaces, remove strap from service if two or more outer layers are burned through, or if the colored ply is visible. If these burns are on the edges of the strap and are more than 1/8-inch deep remove strap from service.
- (g) Acid burns. Straps that have been in contact with acid shall be removed from service.

## 5. CLEANING

5.01 Remove any creosote, paint, oil, grease, tar, etc., that may collect on the strap by wiping the strap with a clean, dry cloth. If this does not remove the surface deposit,<sup>7</sup> petroleum spirits or trichloroethylene should be used on a clean, dry cloth to remove surface deposits. Do not soak the strap, but rub vigorously with the moistened cloth. This cleaning shall be done in a well ventilated location.

5.02 If the strap becomes heavily caked with dried creosote or tar, use a nonalkaline paste type of varnish remover containing paint solvents and paraffin waxes such as "Wonder Paste" to soften the deposit. Daub the paste heavily on the bad spots and allow to remain for from 15 minutes to one hour, the longer time being required to soften the heavier deposits.

The strap should then be wiped with a cloth moistened with trichloroethylene or petroleum spirits as given in Paragraph 5.01. Repeat the operation, if necessary, to remove the deposit. ↙

5.03 No oiling or dressing is required.

## **6. STORING FABRIC SAFETY STRAPS**

6.01 The following precautions should be observed when storing safety straps or when they are not in use:

- (a) Keep straps away from radiators, stoves, steam pipes, fires, and other places where the fabric would be subjected to excessive heat.
- (b) Damp or wet straps should not be packed in lockers, boxes, tool cases, grips, or other containers. Straps should be wiped with a dry cloth and allowed to dry completely by ventilation before storing or packing.
- (c) Safety straps should never be stored with tools unless such tools are equipped with satisfactory guards. When body belts, safety straps and climbers are kept in the same container, the climbers should be fitted with gaff guards to avoid cutting or puncturing the strap with the climber gaffs.
- (d) Store straps in a location free from excessive humidity to prevent mildew.

## **7. DISPOSITION OF STRAPS**

7.01 Straps with major defects shall be withdrawn from service immediately and returned to the storeroom for handling in accordance with the Company's established routine. Such straps shall be tagged "Dangerous, Do Not Use," and, if practicable, the strap shall be marked to show the location of any defects that can not be seen readily.