

A Climber's Guide: Reports of Carabiner Pins Breaking

As described in our recent Product Advisory (**April 11 2008**), North Safety Products has received reports of several instances in which the **carabiner pin** of a **Saf-T-Grip Sleeve** has broken in ordinary use, without being involved in a fall. This pin is part of the energy management system and is designed to break in the event of a fall, deploying the energy absorber. The pin connects the carabiner to the Saf-T-Grip Sleeve. Even with a broken pin, climbers are still safely connected to the fall arrest system by the force-limiting energy absorber.

⚠ WARNING

If a broken carabiner pin is observed or the sleeve no longer slides freely:

- **DO NOT DETACH** the safety harness from the carabiner while climbing. The system will still protect climbers if a fall occurs.
- **STOP CLIMBING** and immediately descend following the steps described below.
- **REMOVE THE SLEEVE FROM SERVICE.** Although the sleeve will continue to protect climbers, a broken pin means the sleeve will no longer slide freely.

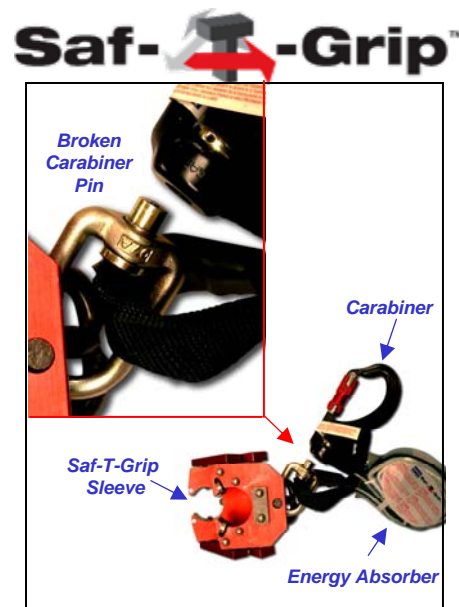


Figure 1



Figure 2

What Should I Do if I'm Climbing and the Pin Breaks?

If you are climbing and the carabiner pin breaks, don't panic! Stop climbing. Even with a broken carabiner pin, the Saf-T-Grip Sleeve will continue to protect you in the event of a fall. However, the sleeve will not slide freely along the rail and must be moved by hand. Although inconvenient, the steps described below are much safer than detaching your harness and climbing without any fall protection.

⚠ **ALWAYS** maintain three points of contact with the ladder.

1. With both feet and one hand firmly on the ladder, grasp the sleeve with your free hand. Gently apply pressure to align the top and bottom plates so that the sleeve can move along the rail (see figure 2).
2. Guide the sleeve down the rail a short distance - no more than one or two rungs of the ladder.
3. Climb down the ladder that same distance (one or two rungs) using proper technique. Refer to the Saf-T-Climb instruction manual and training DVD.
4. Repeat these steps of guiding the sleeve down by hand and then climbing down the ladder until you safely reach the ground.

Note: If you need to rest while climbing, the sleeve must be positioned above the D-ring. This removes any slack in the energy absorber (see figure 3).



Figure 3

How Do I Reduce the Chance of my Carabiner Pin Breaking?

A Saf-T-Grip sleeve that repeatedly jams on the rail while climbing increases your chance of breaking the carabiner pin.

Using the Saf-T-Climb system properly will reduce your chance of breaking the pin. Proper climbing technique is described in the Saf-T-Climb instruction manual and training DVD.

- Climbing too quickly can cause the sleeve to jam on the rail. If the sleeve engages the rail while climbing, **DO NOT** try and force it to continue.
- **NEVER** wear a chest harness. **ONLY** use approved Saf-T-Climb components, including a climbing harness with a D-ring located at the climber's navel.
- **NEVER** suspend yourself using the Saf-T-Climb system. This puts damaging stress on components of the system and increases the likelihood of the pin breaking.
- Wear and damage to the sleeve can cause it to jam. Inspect the friction wheel and bearings on both the top and bottom plates (see figure 4) for flat spots and other signs of wear. Check that both side leg springs are in place and working properly.
- Prior to any climb, **ALWAYS** inspect the entire sleeve and perform the pre-function tests described in the instruction manual and training DVD.

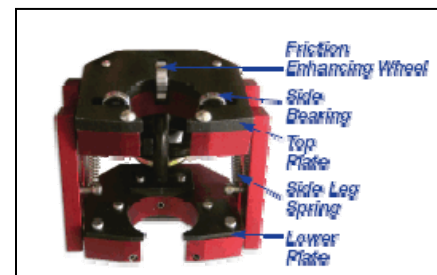


Figure 4