



Scaffold Safety Tips

Scaffolds consist of one or more platforms held together by outrigger beams, brackets, poles, legs, uprights, posts, frames or similar rigid support.

Employees who will be working on scaffolds should be trained to know the types of scaffolds being used, the maximum load and capacity, how to identify and report defects and the dangers involved, such as falls, electrical, struck-by or falling hazards.

Working Safely on Scaffolds

- Guardrails or personal fall arrest systems are required when employees are working on platforms 10 feet or higher.
- Ensure workers wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including hard hats.
- Daily inspect scaffolds and all parts – guardrails, midrails, legs, posts, frames, uprights and metal parts – before each work shift or after any event that may cause damage.
- Verify scaffold is the correct type for loads, materials, employees and weather.
- Working platforms and decks must be planked close to guardrails.
- Planks must be overlapped on a support of at least 6 inches, but no more than 12 inches.
- Legs, posts, frames, poles and uprights must be on base plates, mud sills or a firm foundation, and they must be plumb and braced.
- Before ascending scaffolds, ensure nearby power lines are de-energized or that scaffolds are at least 10 feet away from live power lines.
- Ensure tools and materials are at least 10 feet away from live power lines carrying less than 50kv of power. For lines carrying more than 50kv of power, that distance is increased by 0.4 inches for each 1kv over 50kv.

Inspection Tips

- Check for safe access. Workers should not climb the cross-braces as a means of access.
- The front edge of all platforms should not be more than 14 inches from the face of the work or a maximum of 18 inches from the face for plastering and lathing operations.
- Check for employees under the platform and provide protection from falling objects or barricade the area.
- Check metal components for bends, cracks, holes, rust, welding splatter, pits, broken welds and incompatible parts.

OSHA Resources

OSHA offers an etool that provides an easy to use guide for scaffolding requirements. This etool can be found at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/scaffolding/index.html>

Source: OSHA

Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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