

Facilities Safety

Toolbox Talk

Use of Scaffolds

Inadequate scaffolding is responsible for many construction accidents. Scaffolds should be designed, built and inspected by competent persons. To avoid the use of makeshift platforms, each job should be carefully planned to assure that scaffolding is used when required and that such scaffolding conforms to the applicable regulations.

Guardrails, midrails and toeboards must be installed on all open sides of scaffolds 10 feet or more in height. This guardrail system should be constructed from components furnished by the manufacturer. Where this is not possible, sound 2 x 4 inch lumber must be used for the guardrails and midrails and 1 x 4 inch lumber for the toeboards. Guardrails shall be 36" to 42" high above the floor or platform. If work is to be performed on the scaffold and/or adjacent hazard warrants, guardrails are required at lesser heights.

Scaffold planks must be at least 2 x 10 inch full-thickness lumber, structural grade, or the equivalent.

Scaffold planks must be cleated or secured and must extend over the end supports by at least 6 inches but not by more than 12 inches.

All scaffolds must be fully planked and constructed to support the load they are designed to carry

All scaffold members must be visually inspected before each use. Damaged scaffold members must be removed from service immediately.

Access ladders must be provided for each scaffold. Climbing off the end frames is prohibited unless their design incorporates an approved ladder.

Adequate mud sills or other rigid footing, capable of withstanding the maximum intended load must be provided.

Scaffolds must be tied off to the building or structure at intervals that do not exceed 30 feet horizontally and 26 feet vertically.

Scaffolds should not be overloaded. Materials should be brought up as needed. Excess materials and scrap should be removed from the scaffold when work is completed.

Barrels, boxes, kegs, horses, ladders, loose tile blocks, loose piles of bricks, A-frames or other unstable objects shall not be used as work platforms or to support scaffolds. Never use work platforms mounted on top of other work platforms.

Where persons are required to work or pass under a scaffold, a screen of 18 gauge, 1/2-inch wire mesh or equivalent protection is required between the toe-board and the guardrail.

Overhead protection is required if employees working on scaffolds are exposed to overhead hazards. Such protection must be 2 x 10 inch planks or the equivalent.

Scaffolds or work platforms must not be altered by unauthorized personnel.

