

## Scaffold Safety for Construction: Fall Protection

### 5-Minute Talk

#### Fall Protection

Fall hazards account for a high percentage of the injuries and fatalities experienced by scaffold workers. OSHA has determined that compliance with the fall protection requirements of the scaffold rule will effectively protect your employees from those hazards. Each employee on a scaffold more than 10 feet above a lower level must be protected from falling to that lower level.

Note: The fall protection requirements for employees installing suspension scaffold support systems on floors, roofs, and other elevated surfaces are set forth in 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M — Fall protection.

#### Fall protection systems

Every scaffold user must be protected by either a personal fall arrest or guardrail system. There are two exceptions to this requirement:

- You can use either of the two above systems or a grabline when using a crawling board (chicken ladder).
- Because of the dangers posed, some systems require both a personal fall arrest and a guardrail system. They are: single- or two-point adjustable suspension scaffolds, and self-contained adjustable scaffolds (when the platform is supported by ropes).

The following is a list of the systems required for the scaffold in use:

**Personal fall arrest system**—Boatswains' chair, catenary scaffold, float scaffold, needle beam scaffold, ladder jack scaffold.

**Guardrail system**—Walkways within a scaffold, self-contained adjustable scaffold (when the platform is supported by the frame structure).

**Personal fall arrest or guardrail system**—overhand bricklaying operations and all scaffolds not otherwise specified above.



You must provide fall protection for employees erecting or dismantling supported scaffolds where the installation and use of such protection is feasible and does not create a greater hazard as determined by your competent person.

**Personal fall arrest systems** used on scaffolds must:

- Meet the requirements of 1926.502(d) (fall protection rule)
- Be attached by lanyard to a vertical or horizontal lifeline, or scaffold structural member

**Guardrail systems** installed to meet the requirements of the scaffold rule (1926.451(g)(4)) must be:

- Installed along all open sides and ends of platforms
- Installed before the scaffold is released for use by employees

Guardrail systems built in accordance with Appendix A to the scaffold rule meet the requirements of 1926.451(g)(4).

## Employee Training

The training rule for scaffolds (1926.454) requires specific training for recognizing the hazards associated with scaffolds, falls, and fall protection. It also requires you to train your employees on the procedures to control or minimize fall hazards.

## Training Tips

The most effective type of training is demonstration. Demonstrate the correct use of personal fall arrest equipment including:

- Putting on and taking off of equipment.
- Correct connections to scaffolds.
- Components of the system.

Review the various components of a guardrail system and demonstrate a correct guardrail.

## Where To Go for More Information

29 CFR 1926.451(g)— Scaffolding Fall protection

29 CFR 1926.454—Scaffolding Training

