

Scaffold Safety for Construction: OSHA's Top 5 Scaffolding Violations

Handout

OSHA's Top 5 Scaffolding Violations

Scaffolding hazards continue to rank high on the list of the most frequently cited standards in construction. In fact, these top five scaffolding rules are in the top 20 overall construction safety violations. They also account for approximately 9 percent of all fatalities at construction worksites. When working on scaffolds, be sure you know and follow these OSHA rules.

#1 Fall protection — When on a scaffold more than 10 feet above a lower level you must be protected from falling to that lower level.

#2 Getting to and from the working platform — When scaffold platforms are more than two feet above or below an access point, portable, hook-on, or attachable ladders; stair towers; stairway-type ladders; ramps; walkways; integral prefabricated scaffold access; or direct access from another scaffold, structure, personnel hoist, or similar surface must be used. You cannot use crossbraces as a means of access to the working surface.

#3 Scaffold planking — Each platform on all working levels of a scaffold must be fully planked or decked between the front uprights and the guardrail supports.

#4 Firm foundations — Supported scaffold poles, legs, posts, frames, and uprights must bear on base plates and mud sills or other adequate firm foundation. They must meet the following requirements:

- Footings must be level, sound, rigid, and capable of supporting the loaded scaffold without settling or displacement.
- Unstable objects must not be used to support scaffolds or platform units.
- Unstable objects must not be used as working platforms.
- Front-end loaders and similar pieces of equipment must not be used to support scaffold platforms unless they have been specifically designed by the manufacturer for such use.
- Forklifts must not be used to support scaffold platforms unless the entire platform is attached to the fork and the forklift is not moved horizontally while the platform is occupied.



#5 Scaffold training — Each employee who works from a scaffold must be trained by a person qualified in the subject matter. The trainer must be able to recognize the hazards associated with the type of scaffold being used and understand the procedures to control or minimize those hazards.

The training must include the following areas as they apply to your particular situation:

- The nature of any electrical, fall, and falling object hazards in your work area.
- The correct procedures for dealing with electrical hazards.
- The correct procedures for erecting, maintaining, and disassembling the fall and falling object protection systems being used.
- The proper use of the scaffold, and the proper handling of materials on the scaffold.
- The maximum intended load and the load-carrying capacities of the scaffold being used.
- Any other applicable requirements of the regulation.

