

## Scaffold Safety for Construction: Using Scaffolds

### Handout

#### Using Scaffolds

Working on a scaffold platform is two jobs in one. You must concentrate on your work plus you need to be ever aware of the dangers of working at heights. This is no time to become lax or take shortcuts. It can be a long way to the ground.

Before each work shift, and after any incident which could affect a scaffold's structural integrity, your company competent person must inspect all scaffolds and scaffold components for visible defects. According to OSHA this should adequately protect employees working on scaffolds and ensure that defects are detected before an accident happens.

This doesn't mean you can take your "safety pack" off. When you get to your working surface take time to look around and ensure everything is as it should be. The following rules are just some of the things you should look for when working from a scaffold:

- Never load a scaffold more than its maximum intended load or rated capacity, whichever is less. In order to do this you must know what that figure is. You must also be able to estimate the load (workers, tools, paint buckets, etc.) on the scaffold.
- The scaffold must never be moved while you are on it unless it has been designed to do so.
- When you are near power lines the clearance requirements in 1926.451(f)(6) must be used.
- Swinging loads being hoisted onto or near the scaffold must have tag lines or other measures to control the load.
- Working on scaffolds is prohibited during storms or high winds unless your competent person says it is safe to do so and you are protected by a personal fall arrest system or wind screen.
- Debris must not be allowed to accumulate on the scaffold.
- You cannot use makeshift devices such as boxes and barrels to increase your working height.
- You can't work on a scaffold covered with snow, ice, or other slippery material except to remove the material.
- You cannot increase your working height with a ladder except on large area scaffolds and you must also meet a list of requirements found in §1926.452(f)(15).
- In addition, you must never use shore or lean-to scaffolds. Such scaffolds are not properly designed nor properly constructed and pose a serious threat to anyone working on them.

