

Worksite: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic C276: Scaffolds (B)

**Introduction:** A scaffold is any temporary elevated platform (supported or suspended), and it's supporting structure, that supports workers and materials. Many scaffolds used for construction work are complex structures and workers need to know how to erect them, dismantle them, and work from them safely. Most scaffold related accidents are the result of falls or structural failure.

A primary cause of most OSHA scaffold violations is the lack of proper training and the absence of a designated competent person during scaffold operations. OSHA regulations require that a competent person, who has primary responsibility for supervising and directing all scaffolding erection, dismantling, and altering work, must be present for scaffold operations. The competent person must inspect scaffolds and components for hazards before each work shift and after any event that could affect the scaffold's structural integrity. **The OSHA scaffold safety regulations state:**

- Workers on scaffolds must use appropriate fall protection such as guardrails, safety belts, or fall arrest gear.
- Workers on scaffolds must wear hard hats and be protected by toe-boards, screens, guardrail systems, debris nets, catch platforms, or canopies when falling objects are a hazard. Hard hats cannot be the only means of protection.
- If tools, materials, or equipment could fall from a scaffold and strike others, the area below the scaffold must be barricaded, or a toe-board must be placed along the edge of the scaffold platform. Paneling or screening must protect persons below when tools, materials, or equipment are piled higher than the top edge of the toe-board. Alternatively, guardrail systems, canopies, or catch platforms may be installed to retain materials.
- Supported scaffolds with a height-to-smallest-base-width ratio of more than 4-to-1 (including outrigger supports) must be restrained from tipping by ties, guys, braces, or equivalent means.
- Guys, ties, and braces must be installed where horizontal members support both inner and outer legs. They must be installed according to the manufacturer's recommendations, or at the closest horizontal member to the 4-to-1 height, and repeated vertically at least every 20 feet if the scaffold is up to 3 feet wide; every 26 feet if the scaffold is greater than 3 feet wide. Be sure to use vertical and horizontal tie-ins to keep the scaffold from falling into, or away from, a structure. A qualified person must design the tie-ins.
- Poles, legs, posts, frames, and uprights must stand on base plates and mudsills or a firm foundation
- The scaffold structure must be plumb and braced so that it does not sway. Base plates or footings are always required and must be properly secured and offer full support without settling.
- Scaffolds and their components must not be loaded over their rated capacities. Scaffolds and components must be able to support four times their maximum intended load, not the rated load. The intended load includes workers, equipment, and supplies. The intended load must never exceed the rated load unless approved by an engineer and the manufacturer.
- Platforms are made of individual wood planks, fabricated planks, fabricated decks, and fabricated platforms. A walkway is a portion of a scaffold platform used only for access, not as a work level. All scaffold platforms must be fully decked or planked.
- Wood platforms cannot be covered with opaque finishes, because these cover defects in wood. Wood platform edges may be marked for identification. Preservatives or slip-resistant finishes can be used if they don't hide structural defects.
- Employers must provide all workers with safe access to scaffolds and platforms. Workers must use ladders or stairways to reach platforms that are more than 2 feet above or below the access point. Do not use cross braces as a means of access.
- Prefabricated scaffold-access frames must have rest platforms every 35 ft. Hook-on and attachable ladders on supported scaffolds must have rest platforms at 35-foot intervals; stairway type ladders must have rest platforms every 12 feet.
- Any damaged scaffold or components must be removed from service until it is repaired or replaced.
- Workers must stay clear of power lines and any conductive material on the scaffold.
- Working on a scaffold coated with snow or ice is prohibited unless it is necessary for removal of material.
- Working on a scaffold is prohibited during storms or high winds unless a competent person has determined that it is safe and workers are protected by personal fall-arrest systems or wind screens.

**Conclusion:** Scaffolding is complex equipment that must be used safely in order to avoid accidents. Many employer groups, vendors, apprenticeship programs, and labor organizations offer training on scaffolding requirements. Attending one of these programs, however, that does not necessarily make one a competent person. Follow these guidelines for safe scaffold operations.

**Employee Attendance:** (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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*These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.*