

Scaffolding Erection and Inspection

Week Number 15 (April 9 - 15) 2017 Edition

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this safety talk, participants will be able to:

- Identify the hazards associated with the erection and inspection of a scaffold
- Understand the limitations of who is to erect and inspect a scaffold

A scaffold is as common a piece of equipment on a jobsite as a hammer so It's important for you to know how to keep yourself safe when working on or around scaffolds. There are 3 aspects of safety to be aware of when dealing with scaffolds; construction or erection, inspection and use. Scaffolds can only be erected, moved, dismantled or altered by a competent person who is qualified to do so or under the direct supervision of a competent person. If you're not the competent person, don't attempt to erect scaffolding, ask your supervisor to designate a competent person qualified in scaffold erection to put it up or supervise. Although this may be inconvenient for you, it's for your own safety. When erecting a scaffold, it's important to remember:

- Every platform must be fully decked or planked
- If you're not able to ensure that a platform can support employees and their materials without tipping, block access to the cantilever end
- If the height-to-base width ratio (including outriggers) of a supported scaffold is more than 4:1 it needs to be restrained from tipping by guying, bracing or an equivalent method
- When you're placing a supported scaffold, be certain that the legs, poles and posts are firmly set on base plates, mud sills or other solid foundation.
- In order to prevent the scaffold from swaying, make sure that supported scaffold legs, poles, posts, frames and uprights are plumb and braced.
- Unless space is tight, scaffold platforms and walkways must be at least 18" wide. This requirement does not apply to the following scaffolds: ladder jack, top plate bracket, roof bracket or pump jacket. The width for these types of scaffolds is 12".

Before you climb on a scaffold at the beginning of your shift, be certain that it has been thoroughly inspected by a competent person. Some sites require that inspection tags be placed on a scaffold after each inspection, if this is the case at your site, be sure to check the tag to ensure that it hasn't expired. Even if you're not the competent person, you should give the scaffold a basic inspection. You should check that the fasteners look tight, that the planks or decks are secure and that the footing is firm. If you identify any issue that may affect the scaffold's safe use, tell your supervisor immediately so that it can be repaired. You should also check the walking surface for any slippery materials. This includes water from rain or snow melt, snow, ice or water created from a job process. These slip hazards should be cleared before using the scaffold.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- *Who can officially inspect scaffolding?*
- *How wide must scaffold platforms and walkways be?*
- *You need a small scaffold for only about 15 minutes, you're not the designated competent person qualified to erect scaffolding, but it is just a small section. Is this a problem?*