Toolbox Talk Training: Scaffold Safety – Scaffolds: Safe Use of Work Platforms

This talk follows the work platform construction talk and covers OSHA rules for using a scaffold platform (29 CFR 1926.451(f)). Federal scaffold rules are in OSHA 29 CFR 1926 Subpart L (1926.450-.454) for construction; general industry scaffold work is covered by 29 CFR 1910.27 and 1910.28. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and your employer's rules.

Using the platform

- Do not load scaffolds or components beyond their maximum intended loads or rated capacities, whichever is less (1926.451(f)(1)). Platforms may not deflect more than 1/60 of the span when loaded (1926.451(f)(16)).
- Employees are prohibited from working on scaffolds covered with snow, ice, or other slippery material, except as necessary to remove it (1926.451(f)(8)).
- Do not let debris accumulate on platforms (1926.451(f)(13)).
- Do not use makeshift devices such as boxes and barrels on top of platforms to increase working height (1926.451(f)(14)).
- Ladders may not be used on scaffolds to increase working height, except on large area scaffolds where the employer meets the criteria in 1926.451(f)(15): ladder thrust and platform movement are controlled, ladder legs are stable on the same platform, and ladder legs are secured against slipping.
- Where swinging loads are hoisted onto or near scaffolds so the load might contact the scaffold, tag lines or equivalent measures must control the load (1926.451(f)(9)).

Weather

- Work on or from scaffolds is prohibited during storms or high winds unless a competent person has determined it is safe for employees to be on the scaffold and those employees are protected by a personal fall arrest system or wind screens. Wind screens may not be used unless the scaffold is secured against the anticipated wind forces (1926.451(f)(12)).

Damaged or changed scaffolds

- Any part damaged or weakened must be immediately repaired, replaced, braced, or removed from service until repaired (1926.451(f)(4)). A competent person inspects before each work shift and after any occurrence that could affect structural integrity (1926.451(f)(3)).
- Scaffolds may not be moved horizontally while employees are on them, unless designed by a registered professional engineer for that movement or, for mobile scaffolds, the 1926.452(w) conditions are followed (1926.451(f)(5)).

What other safe work habits for scaffold platforms should we discuss? Thank you for participating. Please sign the sign-in form before leaving so your attendance is recorded. Signatures record attendance only, not certification or completion of required training.

General safety information only. This material does not replace required training, a site-specific hazard assessment, or professional safety advice. Before using it, verify current requirements with OSHA (osha.gov) and your employer. Follow applicable regulations, equipment manufacturers' instructions, and your employer's safety procedures.

Sources: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.451(f)(1), (3)-(5), (8), (9), (12)-(16). Discussion aid.

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TOOLBOX TALK TRAINING SIGN-IN FORM

Topic discussed: Scaffold Safety - Scaffolds: Safe Use of Work Platforms

Company Name:_____ Date:_____

Discussion led by:_____

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