Toolbox Talk Training: Scaffold Safety – Scaffolds: Work Platform Construction

A scaffold platform must be built to support the people and materials on it. This talk summarizes OSHA's platform construction rules in 29 CFR 1926.451(b). 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.

- Full decking: each platform on all working levels must be fully planked or decked between the front uprights and the guardrail supports. The space between adjacent units and between the platform and uprights may be no more than 1 inch, except where the employer can demonstrate a wider space is necessary, such as when side brackets are used. In that case the platform must be as fully decked as possible and the open space may not exceed 9 1/2 inches (1926.451(b)(1)). Platforms used solely as walkways or solely by erectors and dismantlers have an exception.
- Width: platforms and walkways must be at least 18 inches wide, with the exceptions and narrow-area rules in 1926.451(b)(2).
- Distance from work: the front edge may not be more than 14 inches from the face of the work unless guardrails and/or personal fall arrest systems are used. The maximum is 3 inches for outrigger scaffolds and 18 inches for plastering and lathing (1926.451(b)(3)).
- Platform ends: unless cleated or otherwise restrained, each end must extend over the centerline of its support at least 6 inches (1926.451(b)(4)).
- Overhang: an end of a platform 10 feet or less may not extend over its support more than 12 inches, and a platform longer than 10 feet may not extend more than 18 inches. The exception is a platform designed and installed so the cantilevered part supports its load without tipping, or one with guardrails that block access to the cantilevered end (1926.451(b)(5)).
- Abutted planks: each abutted end must rest on a separate support surface. Common supports such as "T" sections, or hook-on platforms designed for common supports, are allowed (1926.451(b)(6)).
- Overlapped platforms: the overlap must occur only over supports and be at least 12 inches, unless the platforms are nailed together or otherwise restrained to prevent movement (1926.451(b)(7)).
- Direction changes: where a platform changes direction, the platform resting at an angle other than a right angle over a bearer is laid first, and platforms resting at right angles over the same bearer are laid on top (1926.451(b)(8)).
- Wood platforms may not be covered with opaque finishes, except platform edges may be covered or marked for identification (1926.451(b)(9)).

If a platform looks wrong or damaged, stay off it and report it to the competent person or your supervisor.

Do you see platform problems on our scaffolds that we should fix? 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(b)(1)-(9). Discussion aid.

Free toolbox talk from Toolboxtalk.com. Do not sell, modify, or use on commercial websites for profit.

TOOLBOX TALK TRAINING SIGN-IN FORM

Topic discussed: Scaffold Safety - Scaffolds: Work Platform Construction

Company Name:_____ Date:_____

Discussion led by:_____

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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.

Free toolbox talk from Toolboxtalk.com. Do not sell, modify, or use on commercial websites for profit.