



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

# Weekly Safety Meeting

---

## Working Safely on Scaffolding

Scaffolding allows you to do your job at elevated heights. But without proper training, your work on a scaffolding system puts you at risk for falls or for being hit by falling objects, both of which could cause serious or even fatal injuries.

Every year nearly 100 fatalities and 10,000 injuries occur on scaffolding across the country, despite numerous safety regulations aimed to prevent such incidents. There are a number of different scaffold types, having different rules and regulations surrounding their assembly, fall prevention requirements, and inspection procedures. The good news is, proper training can prevent almost all scaffold accidents.

### Competent person:

An OSHA "competent person" is defined as "one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them."

A competent person must inspect scaffolding before each use to see that it is in good condition and operable.

### Scaffold hazards:

- Falls from elevation due to lack of fall protection;
- Collapse of the scaffold caused by instability or overloading;
- Being struck by falling tools, work materials, or debris; and
- Electrocuting, principally due to proximity of the scaffold to overhead power lines.

### General rules for scaffolding:

- All employees that access scaffolding must receive training.
- A competent person shall be clearly identified for all scaffolding work.
- Guardrails & toe boards shall be installed on all open sides/ends of scaffolding platforms 6 feet or more above ground or floor level;
  - Fall protection is required at a 10' level above a lower level.
- A hard hat must be worn at all times while working on or near scaffolding.

- Employees shall not climb cross braces or end frames unless end frames are designed to be climbed.
  - When scaffold platforms are more than 2 feet above or below a point of access, an access ladder, stair tower, or equivalent safe access shall be provided for all scaffolding
- Do not use a ladder or other device on scaffolding platforms to increase height or reach.
- Never use scaffolding until it is inspected and signed off by a competent person.

### **Inspections:**

- At the beginning of each shift scaffolding must be inspected by a competent person.
  - Use the Daily Scaffold Inspection tags.
  - The tag must be hung where the employees access the scaffold.

### **Do:**

- Make sure a competent person has inspected the scaffold before you go up.
- Wear a hard hat whether you work on or under a scaffold.
- Be sure to wear sturdy shoes with nonslip soles as well.
- Use a personal fall arrest system whenever required.
- Watch out for co-workers on the scaffold as well as people below.
- Always use common sense when working on any scaffold, and move around slowly and carefully.
- Ask a supervisor if you're not sure if a scaffold or working conditions are safe.

### **Don't:**

- Take chances;
- Overload a scaffold;
- Keep debris or unnecessary materials on a scaffold where someone could trip over them or accidentally knock them off the platform;
- Hit a scaffold with anything heavy—a truck, a forklift, a load of lumber, etc;
- Leave materials and equipment on the platform at the end of the day; or
- Use an outdoor scaffold in stormy or windy weather, or if it's covered with ice or snow.

### **Remember:**

Before a scaffold job begins, all workers should receive training on that particular scaffolding system and on any required personal fall protection equipment including its inspection, use, and replacement. Workers should practice safe behaviors on scaffolding at all times.

**DON'T FALL DOWN ON THE JOB...USE SCAFFOLDS SAFELY!**

