

OSHA's Top 5

Scaffolding issues are frequently part of the top 5 most cited violations by OSHA. In 2021, they ranked 4th with 1,948 citations issued. These citations include:

1. Use of fall protection while working from an aerial lift
2. Use of fall protection above 10' (**See Note at bottom**)
3. Safe access points above 2'
4. Full planking on all work levels
5. Training by a qualified person
[OSHA 1926.450-454]

Who Is a Competent Person per OSHA?

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." [29 CFR 1926.32(f)]

What's The Difference?

Qualified – A person with adequate education or experience to solve or resolve problems related to a particular work or subject matter.

Authorized – A person assigned by an employer to perform specific duties or to be at a specific location(s) on a jobsite.

Competent – Requires both qualification through education or experience, AND authorization from the employer to make corrections.

****NOTE**** Scaffolds have a different, and specific height requirement for fall protection. This does not apply to other situations in construction or general industry that are governed by the 6' and 4' height requirements. See OSHA 1926.451(g)(1)



-Scaffolding- Have You Inspected It Today?

All Scaffolding Requires Daily Inspection

Scaffolds are defined as, "any temporary elevated platform and its support structure for the use of supporting employees or materials," and are fairly common place in the construction and industrial work environments. Being a type of aerial lift, albeit non-mechanized, it is subject to additional safety measures and rules.

Rule number one, and one of the most commonly overlooked, is the requirement for a daily inspection.

"Scaffolds and scaffold components shall be inspected for visible defects by a competent person before each work shift, and after any occurrence which could affect a scaffold's structural integrity." OSHA 1926.451(f)(3)

Never use SCAFFOLDING that has not been inspected for the day by a competent person. This inspection insures that the scaffolding was erected safely and completely, and verifies that the structural integrity is sound. Additionally, scaffolding should be inspected anytime the structural integrity may have been compromised (ex. Machinery colliding with the scaffold, or large loads being dropped onto the scaffold).

The inspection will also determine if additional safety measures are required, such as wearing a safety harness and lanyard. These requirements should be documented on the inspection tag.

**Contact Safe Workforce today
for your safety and training needs!**

Inspection tags should be updated daily with each inspection, and affixed to the scaffolding at each access point.

Green Tags – "Safe For Use." The scaffold is ok and safe to use. There are no additional requirements for use.

Yellow Tags – "Caution." Indicates that special requirements are needed for safe use, and replaces the green tag whenever the scaffold has been modified to meet work requirements and may pose an additional hazard to employees. A common example is requiring additional fall protection, such as a harness and lanyard.

Red Tags – "Danger – Unsafe For Use." Commonly used during set up and break down of scaffolding, and when the daily inspection determines that the structural integrity of the scaffolding has been compromised. Additionally, a red tag should replace green and yellow tags anytime the scaffolding is left unattended.

Finally, remember that falls are the leading cause of death in the construction industry. Scaffolds provide a unique set of circumstances that can increase the risk of falls. However, with proper training, education, and operating procedures, employers can insure that employees are safe and protected from these risks.