

WALKING & WORKING SURFACES



Walking and Working Surfaces (Slips, Trips, and Falls)

- Slips, trips, and falls constitute the majority of general industry accidents. They cause 15% of all accidental deaths and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities.
- Most of these types of accidents can be prevented with improved housekeeping, appropriate guardrails, maintenance of walking surfaces, and remaining alert to the work surroundings.
- Select activities must add a fall protection system such as cable and harness. Contact EHS for specific guidance related to working at heights of six feet or more where there are no guardrails; working on sloped roofs or on flat roofs within six feet of the edge; and working on moving scaffolding, lifts, or buckets.

General Housekeeping

- Keep places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service room clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.
- Keep floors clean and dry. Where wet processes are used, such as dish washers and cage washers, equip the area with drainage and gratings, mats, or raised platforms.
- Remove items that present tripping hazards, such as mats that do not lay flat.
- Return equipment to designated storage areas after use.

Aisles and Passageways

- Keep aisles and passageways clear of obstructions or objects that may present a tripping hazard.
- If mechanical handling equipment is used, ensure there is enough room in the aisle or passageway for employees to walk and for emergency egress.
- Clearly mark permanent aisles and passageways in machinery and equipment rooms. For example, paint or tape markings on floors.

Open Pits, Tanks, Vats, and Ditches

- Protect employees from hazards of open pits, tanks, ditches, and vats by using covers and/or guardrails.

Floor Loading Protection

- Load rating limits shall be marked on plates and conspicuously posted.
- The load rating limit shall not be exceeded by placing loads on the roof or floor of a building or structure greater than that for which it is approved.

Floor and Wall Openings and Holes

- For stairway openings, standard railings shall be provided on all exposed sides except at the stairway entrance.
- Where a person can accidentally walk into a floor hole, it shall be guarded by either a standard railing with toe board, or a floor hole cover of standard strength and construction. If the cover or guard rail is not in place, the hole must be attended by a person, or protected by a removable standard railing.

Open Sided Floors or Platforms (catwalk) - 4 Feet or More above Level

- An open-sided floor or platform or runway that is 4 feet or more above ground level or above the adjacent floor shall be guarded by a standard railing on all open sides (except where there is an entrance to a ramp, stairway, or fixed ladder).
- If a person can pass beneath the open sides, if there is moving machinery, or if equipment or materials could fall and create a hazard, then the railing must include a toe board on each exposed side.

Open Sided Floors or Platforms by Dangerous Equipment – at Any Height

- Regardless of height, if the open-sided floor, walkway, platform, or runway is above or adjacent to dangerous equipment, degreasing units, or similar hazards, it shall be guarded with a standard railing and toe board.

Manually Propelled Mobile Ladder Stands and Scaffold Towers

- Detailed specific requirements in OSHA standard 1910.29 should be carefully reviewed. Guardrails and toe boards are required for work levels 10 feet or more above the ground or floor.
- Aerial ladders have additional requirements.
- Brief general requirements include that the maximum work height shall not exceed four times the minimum base dimension unless outriggers, guys, or braces are added to provide stability.