

 <p>North Carolina Department of Labor</p>	EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM	Section:
	Unit-Specific Procedures	Policy: C-11
	<u>Title:</u> Fall Protection	<u>Effective:</u> 1/13/2023
	<u>Unit:</u> OSH Compliance	<u>Rescinds:</u>

References:

North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry, 29 CFR Part 1910 Subpart D

North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Standards for the Construction Industry, 29 CFR 1926 Subparts M, P, X

Metal and Nonmetal Surface Mine Safety and Health, 30 CFR Part 56, Subpart B.

North Carolina State Employees' Workplace Requirements Manual for Safety and Health, Section 4, Policy 4.5.

North Carolina State Building Code, Volumes I and IX.

Purpose:

To specify the actions the Compliance Bureau shall take to protect employees from the hazards of falling to the same or lower level and from the hazards of crushing loads falling on employees.

Definitions:

I. Benching - A method of protecting employees from cave-ins by excavating the sides of an excavation to form one or a series of horizontal levels or steps, usually with vertical or near vertical surfaces between levels, and with a resulting ratio between the top and bottom of the excavation equal to the requirements for sloping for the soil type in 29 CFR 1926 Subpart P, Appendices A and B.

II. Construction Activities - Construction, alteration, or repair, and excavation, including painting and decorating.

III. Dangerous Equipment - Equipment that, as a result of form or function, may be hazardous to employees who fall onto or into it, including but not limited to galvanizing tanks, degreasing units, machinery with exposed moving parts, and electrical equipment.

IV. Excavation - Any man-made cut, cavity, trench, or depression in an earth surface, formed by earth removal, excluding surface metal and nonmetal mines.

V. Handrail - A single bar, pipe, or rail used to provide employees with a handhold for support.

VI. Heights Triggering Fall Protection -

- A. Where employees are performing job duties on a construction site or which involve construction activities, six feet or more above the lowest surface upon which the employee could directly fall.
- B. Where employees are performing job duties at any other location, four feet above the lowest surface upon which the employee could directly fall.
- C. Any height where the employee must work directly adjacent to or above dangerous equipment.
- D. Where employees are required to access a prefabricated scaffold on a construction site or which involves construction activities, six feet or more above the lowest surface upon which the employee can directly fall "if" the scaffold is enclosed with guardrails.

VII. Hole - a gap or void 2 inches or greater in its least dimension in a walking/working surface.

VIII. Ladder - An appliance usually consisting of two side rails joined at regular intervals by rungs and installed at an angle of 75° to 90°, used to access elevated walking/working surfaces or locations above the height of a person.

IX. Open-Sided Walking/Working Surface - A walking/working surface that does not have at every edge a wall, parapet, or similarly substantial permanent barrier at least 39 inches high at every point except points of access (including holes within the interior of the surface large enough for an employee to pass through).

X. Point of Access - The point where stairways, ramps, and similar devices allow access to a walking/working surface.

XI. Rungs - The crosspieces of a ladder on which a person may step in ascending and descending.

XII. Scaffold - A temporary elevated platform and its supporting structure, used for supporting workers, material, or both.

XIII. Shoring - A structure that supports the sides of an excavation and which is designed to prevent cave-ins, including but not limited to metal hydraulic, mechanical, or timber shoring systems.

XIV. Sloping - A method of protecting employees from cave-ins by excavating to form sides of an excavation that are inclined away from the excavation at an angle determined by the requirements of 29 CFR 1926 Part P, Appendices A and B.

XV. Stable Rock - Natural solid mineral material that can be excavated with vertical sides and remain intact while exposed.

XVI. Stairway - A series of four or more steps or risers leading from one walking/working surface to another.

XVII. Stepstool - A movable platform or series of platforms designed to be used to increase an employee's height from the floor while accessing overhead storage or similar material.

XVIII. Stepladder - A self-supporting portable ladder, nonadjustable in length, having flat steps and a hinged back.

XIX. Walking/Working Surface - Any surface, whether horizontal or vertical, on which an employee walks or works, including but not limited to floors, roofs, ramps, bridges, runways, formwork, and platforms.

Policy / Procedures:

I. The Department of Labor shall ensure that all walking and working surfaces within its control are in compliance with the requirements of 29 CFR Part 1910, Subpart D.

II. All Compliance Bureau employees are prohibited from entering within 10 feet of any open-sided surface that is at or higher than the height triggering fall protection, unless:

- A. The employee is protected from falling by an acceptable form of fall protection which complies with the requirements of 29 CFR 1926.502, or 29 CFR 1910, Subpart D; or
- B. The employee complies with requirements for fall protection, in compliance with 29 CFR 1910 Subpart D, and 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M.

III. Employees performing duties near excavations shall maintain a safe distance at all times.

IV. Employees performing job duties shall not enter any excavation unless:

- A. The Bureau Chiefs or Supervisors have determined that entry in excavations is necessary for the performance of the employee's job duties and the mission of the Compliance Unit; and

- B. The Bureau Chiefs or Supervisors have trained the employee to recognize hazards associated with excavations and in the means to determine whether the necessary safety devices and/or configuration has been provided; and
- C. The employee can establish that the excavation is entirely in stable rock; or has been sloped, benched, or shored in compliance with the requirements of 29 CFR 1926.652(a)(1); or the employee can enter, work, and leave the excavation without coming within a distance of any unprotected side equal to the height of the side.

V. No Compliance Bureau employee in the performance of job duties shall ascend or descend a stairway that:

- A. Does not have a handrail installed the entire length of the flight to include both top rail and mid rail; or
- B. Has an unprotected side presenting a fall at or greater than the height triggering fall protection; or
- C. Has missing or broken risers.
- D. Has metal pan landings and/or treads that are not secured in place, or are improperly filled with loose wood or other material, until permanently filled.

VI. No Compliance Bureau employee shall utilize a portable or fixed ladder that is not constructed and erected in accordance with the requirements contained in 29 CFR 1910.25, 26, and 27; and 29 CFR 1926.1053.

VII. No Compliance Bureau employee shall access any scaffold unless it has been determined that the scaffolding has been erected by a competent person and meets the applicable standards.

VIII. Walking/Working Surfaces in DOL Controlled Buildings

- A. Inspection and Correction
 - 1. The condition of walking/working surfaces shall be inspected as provided in DOL Employee Safety and Health Policy 2-A: Safety and Health Inspections.
 - 2. Walking/working surfaces found to be in violation of safety and health regulations shall be immediately barricaded against fall hazards or employee access until the hazard can be permanently corrected.

3. Walking/working surfaces found to be in violation of safety and health regulations shall be marked with a sign until the hazard can be permanently corrected.
4. Walking/working surfaces at heights greater than 6 feet, shall be assessed and evaluated as to its structural integrity via an engineering report or survey.

B. Step Stools and Stepladders

1. Each location where storage exceeds five feet in height shall be provided with a stepstool or stepladder of sufficient height to allow employees to reach the storage without reaching over their heads.
2. Employees shall not use the top step or the pinnacle plateau of a stepladder.

IX. Training

- A. The training for field employees shall, at a minimum, cover the following topics:
1. The recognition of each type of fall hazard identified.
 2. The types of fall protection that may be provided by the employer or owner, how to identify their presence or absence, and how to determine their adequacy to protect against the fall hazard.
 3. The procedures for accessing an area containing fall hazards.
 4. The requirements of 29 CFR 1926, Subpart M (Construction), and 29 CFR 1910 Subpart D (General Industry).
- B. Employees reasonably anticipated to use ladders shall be trained in the following additional topics:
1. The types of ladders acceptable for use.
 2. The minimum requirements for construction of each type of ladder.
- C. Employees authorized to use personal fall arrest systems shall be trained in the following additional topics:
1. The proper use, inspection, and care of the personal fall arrest system.
 2. The identification of adequate anchorage points.
 3. The limitations of the personal fall arrest system.

4. Indications of unacceptable wear or damage to the equipment.
 5. Emergency Procedures.
 6. The requirements listed in 29 CFR 1926.503.
- D. Training shall be provided to employees prior to assignment of any duty with a reasonably anticipated exposure to fall hazards.
- E. When the Supervisors or Bureau Chiefs have reason to believe that any employee who has already been trained, does not have the understanding and skill required to follow the procedures for fall protection, or use the appropriate fall protection system; the Supervisors or Bureau Chiefs shall assure retraining of such employee, or when:
- a. Changes in the workplace render previous training obsolete or;
 - b. When there are changes in the type of fall protection systems or equipment to be used or;
 - c. When there are inadequacies or indication that knowledge or skill in fall protection procedures or equipment has not been retained by affected employee.

_____(signed on original)_____
Paul Sullivan,
Assistant Director, OSH Compliance

____1/13/2023_____
Date of Approval