

Scaffolding Safety Guide

STOP! Before you climb...



WorkplaceNL

Health | Safety | Compensation



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Disclaimer

The purpose of this Guide is to help employers, as well as employees to understand the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. It provides information to help clarify the intent of certain sections of the Regulations and answer in plain language, commonly asked questions. It is important to remember however, that this Guide is only an explanation of the Regulations. It is not a legal document.

In determining your rights and obligations under the Regulations, you must refer to the specific sections. In the event of a difference between this Guide and the Regulations, the Regulations prevail.

The reader should be aware, that unless otherwise stated, any reference to a code, standard or guideline is to the most recent version of that document. This is relevant because these documents are updated periodically.

The Guide contains illustrations that are intended to help readers understand the requirements of the OH&S Regulations, as well as provide clarification for this Guide. The illustrations are not intended to depict exactly what is required to comply with our OH&S Regulations, but rather to identify possibilities that may assist in formulating an appropriate solution to a particular situation that may be identified at a workplace.

Objectives

This Guide will assist employers, supervisors and employees to:

- ✓ Scaffolding selection
- ✓ Safe scaffolding set-up and use
- ✓ Identify hazards related to scaffolding
- ✓ Do's & Don'ts of scaffolding

As required by Part XI of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

Roles & Responsibilities of Workplace Parties

1. Employer: A person who employs one or more employees and includes an employers' organization and any person who acts on behalf of an employer. They shall:

- ▶ Where it is reasonably practicable, provide the information, instruction, training and supervision and facilities that are necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of his or her workers.
- ▶ Ensure that his or her workers, and particularly his or her supervisors, are made familiar with health or safety hazards that may be met by them in the workplace.

2. Supervisor: A person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker. They are a person who exercises supervisory functions over another employee or employees (hiring, evaluating, assigning work, disciplining, and dismissing). They are the link between management and workers.

- ▶ Ensure where it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all workers under his or her supervision.
- ▶ Advise workers under his or her supervision of the health or safety hazards that may be met by them in the workplace.
- ▶ Provide proper written or oral instructions regarding precautions to be taken for the protection of all workers under his or her supervision; and
- ▶ Ensure that a worker under his or her supervision uses or wears protective equipment, devices or other apparel that the *Act*, the regulations or the worker's employer requires to be used or worn.

3. Worker: A worker, while at work, shall take reasonable care to protect his or her own health and safety and that of workers and other persons at or near the workplace.

- ▶ Further, a worker shall:
 - co-operate with his, her employer and with

- other workers in the workplace to protect
- (i) His or her own health and safety,
 - (ii) The health and safety of other workers engaged in the work of the employer,
 - (iii) The health and safety of other workers or persons not engaged in the work of the employer but present at or near the workplace;
- use devices and equipment provided for his or her protection in accordance with the instructions for use and training provided with respect to the devices and equipment.



Rights of Workers

----> Right to Know

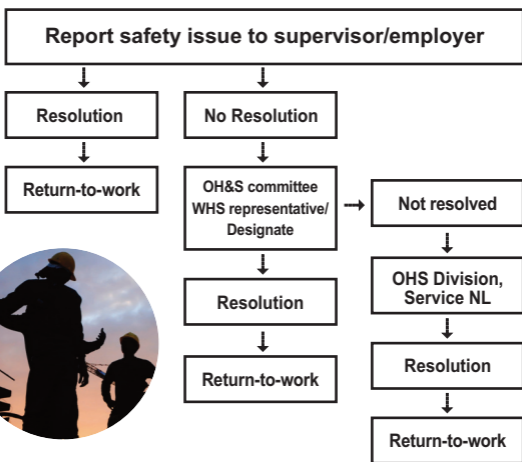
Workers have a right to know what hazards are in the workplace so that appropriate control measures can be implemented to ensure a safe work environment.

----> Right to Participate

OH&S Committees, Workplace Health & Safety representatives or designates provide leadership and co-operation on OH&S issues in the workplace.

----> Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

Employees have a right to refuse unsafe work if they believe it may harm themselves, co-workers or the general public.



Scaffold Selection

Scaffold or Scaffolding - a temporary work platform and its supporting structure used for supporting workers, or materials, or both.

An employer is responsible to decide on the type of scaffolding to be used. There are many different types of scaffolds all designed for specific purposes. Knowing the purpose of these scaffolds will help to select the right one for the job. Once the type of scaffold is determined, it shall be erected according to manufacturer's specifications and OH&S Regulations.

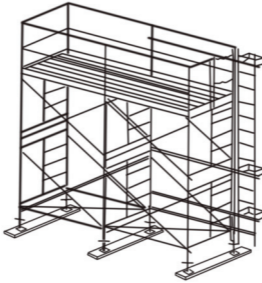


A scaffold shall be erected, altered and dismantled by, or under the direct supervision of, qualified workers. Employers shall ensure that scaffolds used by their workers are in safe condition, regardless of who erected the scaffolds.

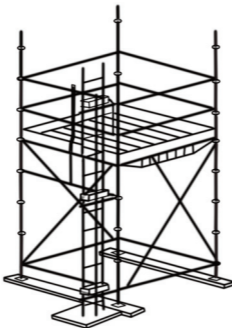
A qualified worker means being knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience or a combination of them.

The following various forms of scaffolding are available

End Frame Scaffold - a system of fabricated tubular metal frames (panels) that are connected in the field with bracing members.



System Scaffold - a scaffold consisting of posts with fixed connection points which accept runners, bearers and diagonal braces that can be interconnected at predetermined levels.



SCAFFOLD

DO'S

- ✓ 1. Employer checks that scaffolds are in safe condition prior to use.
- ✓ 2. Planks, decks, and guardrails are installed and secure.
- ✓ 3. Use a hoist or rope to move materials to upper levels.
- ✓ 4. Install cross bracing at all levels and make sure locking devices and ties are secure.
- ✓ 5. There is safe entrance to working levels.
- ✓ 6. Base is sound, level, and adjusted.



SCAFFOLDING

DON'TS

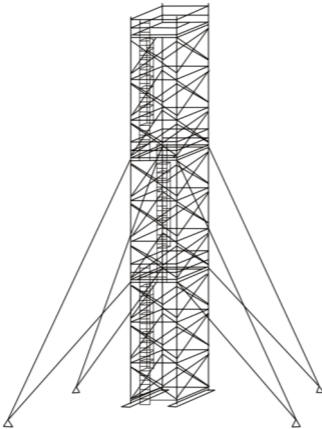
- ❌ 1. Do not carry materials when climbing scaffolding.
- ❌ 2. Do not force braces to fit.
- ❌ 3. Do not climb or stand on cross braces or guardrails.
- ❌ 4. Do not work on scaffolding during storms or high winds.
- ❌ 5. Do not jump from planks or platforms.
- ❌ 6. Do not rest materials or equipment on guardrails.



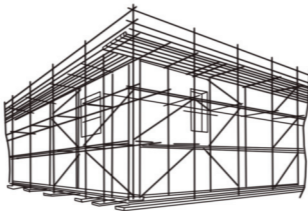
Information courtesy of WSCC of NT
(Workers' Safety & Compensation Commission of the
Northwest Territories and Nunavut)

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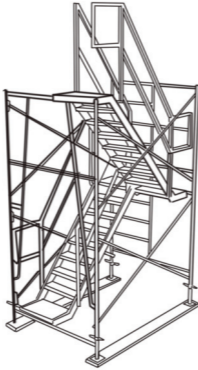
Tower Scaffold - a double-pole scaffold comprised of only one bay.



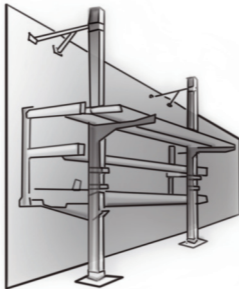
Tube and Coupler Scaffold - an assembly of tubing members (posts, bearers, runners, diagonal braces, ties), a base supporting the posts and special couplers to connect the uprights and to join the various members.



Tubular Metal Scaffold - a scaffold with members made primarily of steel or aluminum tubing.



Pumpjack Scaffold - a scaffold consisting of vertical poles, platform planking and movable platform brackets that travel on the vertical poles.



Safe Scaffolding Set-up

- ▶ A professional engineer is required:
 - when the scaffolding exceeds 25m in height;
 - exceeds 20m in height where a stairway is included;
 - is used to support a temporary floor;
 - is subject to loads which can cause overturning; or
 - is suspended from a structure.
- ▶ Carefully follow manufacturer's instructions for safe set-up.
- ▶ Level and adjust the base. It must sit on a firm surface, like asphalt, concrete or wood sills.
- ▶ Properly brace the scaffolding at all times. Maximum unsecured height is three times its minimum base. Outriggers may be used to increase the base width. Horizontally tied at a minimum every third bay or 6.4m.



- ▶ Use proper fall protection. Workers who use an active fall protection system shall be trained in a fall protection program as

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prescribed by WorkplaceNL. (section 139 OH&S Regulations)

- ▶ Install cross bracing at all levels and make sure locking devices and ties are secure.
- ▶ Set-up a safe distance from power lines and other conductive materials (minimum 5.5m without clearance from the power line utility).



- ▶ Inspect the scaffolding and all components to make sure everything is in good working condition. Do this at set-up, and before each shift.
- ▶ Ensure planks, decks, toe boards and guardrails are in place, and secure. Planks and decks must rest on the structural members and not the ladder rungs.

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Safe Scaffolding Use

- ▶ Use a hoist or rope to move materials to upper levels.
- ▶ Do not carry materials when climbing scaffolding.
- ▶ Do not allow tools, materials, or debris (grease, dirt, snow, ice) to accumulate on the platform.
- ▶ Do not overload the scaffolding with too many people or materials in any one area.
- ▶ Make sure there is a safe entrance to all working levels.
- ▶ Barricade areas below if there is a chance of items falling from the scaffolding. Make sure there is a control zone for the lifting area.
- ▶ Never work on scaffolding during storms or high winds.

Ensure the ground conditions of your work site are safe

STOP. Before you climb...

Job sites should be inspected

- ▶ To assure ground conditions are able to support the scaffold and for proximity of electric power lines, overhead obstructions, wind conditions as well as the need for overhead protection or weather protection coverings.

- ▶ Inspections must address all supporting members, anchors, platforms, clearance requirements, and proximity hazards such as power lines and fall protection specific to each scaffold type.
- ▶ Guardrails should be installed on all open sides and ends. Toe boards, screens or barricades need to be in place to prevent material falling off the scaffold and canopies installed to protect scaffold workers from debris falling from above.

Is there traffic (pedestrians, vehicles, worksite equipment, etc.) in the surrounding area?

- ▶ Safety nets, designed to contain materials, tools and equipment should be installed when scaffolds are erected over high worker, pedestrian or equipment/material transport traffic areas.
- ▶ Report defective or missing guardrails, toe boards, safety nets, or other fall protection systems immediately.

Has a competent person inspected the scaffold before each shift?

- ▶ Access and scaffold ladders are designed for use with the type of scaffold? Do not climb on bracing and support members to reach the platform.

Are any of the scaffold components rusted, bent or damaged?

- ▶ Never use a scaffold which appears to

be defective, unstable, or missing components. This can put a worker at risk. Call your supervisor immediately.

Is there a tripping hazard from tools, material, and debris accumulation on the platform?

- ▶ Keep the amount of tools, equipment and materials to a minimum on scaffolds to reduce slip, trip and fall accidents.
- ▶ Guardrails and mid-rails should be installed on all open sides. Guardrail height is between 0.9 – 1.1 m.
- ▶ Make sure the scaffold rests on stable level supports and surfaces. When using a mobile scaffold, make sure the wheels are locked before using it.
- ▶ Never move mobile scaffolds while they are in use or by pulling yourself along while standing on the top plank. You can easily tip the scaffold causing serious injuries.
- ▶ Have slippery conditions been removed? Slippery scaffold platforms should be immediately repaired or replaced.
- ▶ If supporting members, footing, braces, and platforms appear to be damaged or defective, do not use the scaffold. Contact your supervisor immediately.

Are there proper clearances from power lines?

- ▶ (5.5m without a permit) Do not work near energized electrical lines unless you are trained and authorized.

- ▶ Safe access exists and climbing on cross-bracing is prohibited. Always access and leave scaffolds in a safe manner, using ladders, stairs or ramps. Never climb the bracing or supports to access or descend from scaffolds.
- ▶ Hoist up heavy tools, equipment and supplies. Do not carry them.
- ▶ Do not paint wood planks.
- ▶ Rest platforms are installed at appropriate intervals.

Is everyone wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

- ▶ Anyone who is erecting, moving, dismantling or using scaffolding wearing the appropriate PPE (head, hand, eye, foot protection).

Summary

This guide is intended to provide a handy field and office reference for employers, supervisors and workers responsible for complying with the Newfoundland Occupational Health and Safety Regulations as they apply to scaffolding.

Scaffolding provides safe and efficient work platforms when constructed and used correctly. However, if not properly erected and maintained, scaffolding can lead to accidents, serious injuries and death. It is up to you to make sure that all your workers are trained in the proper selection, erection, maintenance and use of this equipment.

Nothing in this guide shall be taken to relieve any person from compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and Regulations or any other Federal, Provincial or Municipal law or regulations in force at the time and place where scaffolding is being erected and used.

Finally, both employers and workers should remember that under the Province's occupational health and safety legislation, it is an offence for anyone to carry out work where imminent danger exists.



For Information contact:

Occupational Health and Safety Division, Service NL

t 709.729.2706

t 1.800.563.5471

Accident Reporting Line

t 709.729.4444

www.servicenl.gov.nl.ca/ohs

WorkplaceNL

t 709.778.1000

St. John's

t 1.800.563.9000

Grand Falls-Windsor

t 1.800.563.3448

Corner Brook

t 1.800.563.2772

www.workplacenl.ca



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