

## INTRODUCTION

Scaffolds are commonly used in the entertainment industry to construct sets and stages, the performance of stunts, as part of the scene, to facilitate complex lighting arrangements, the setup of special effects, and so on. However, both crew and cast members can be exposed to harm when setting up or working from these structures. In this lesson, we will cover definitions used under the Cal/OSHA regulations for scaffolds, the hazards associated with scaffolds, the personal protective equipment that may be worn when working from a scaffold, and the safe work practices associated with these structures.



*Please note that under the Cal/OSHA standards, scaffolds that are used outside of construction settings for general activities should be of construction that is at least equivalent to that required under the construction standards and should be suitable for the work to be performed.*

## DEFINITIONS

Under the Cal/OSHA construction requirements for scaffolds, the following terms are defined as the following:

**Access:** A means of reaching a workspace or a work area.

**Qualified Person:** A person designated by the employer who by reason of training, experience or instruction has demonstrated the ability to safely perform all assigned duties and, when required, is properly licensed in accordance with federal, state, or local laws and regulations.

**Personal Fall Arrest System:** A system used to arrest an employee in a fall from a working level. It consists of an anchorage, connectors, a body belt or body harness and may include a lanyard, deceleration device, lifeline, or suitable combinations of these.

**Scaffold:** A temporary, elevated structure used for the support of a platform.

## HAZARDS

When using a scaffold to construct a set, for lighting, stunts, or other tasks, you and other crew and/or cast members could be exposed to one or more of the following hazards:

- Falling from the scaffold
- Having the scaffold collapse
- Falling objects such as tool and equipment
- Electrocution from the scaffolding being erected too close to power lines or from improperly grounded tools and equipment

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

To help minimize the chances of an injury occurring when working from or performing from a scaffold, you should wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for your job task. PPE may include:

- Hard hat





# ENTERTAINMENT: SCAFFOLD SAFETY (CAL/OSHA)

- Helmet
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Close-toed or steel-toed shoes
- Fall harness

*Please note that depending on the scaffold and the task that you are performing, the production may require additional personal protective equipment.*

You should inspect all provided PPE for wear or damage before you put it on. Report worn or damaged items to your supervisor or designated contact. Do NOT wear damaged PPE.

## SAFE WORK PRACTICES

### Erecting Scaffolds

Scaffolds should be erected under the supervision and direction of a qualified person. If you will be part of the erecting team, you should do the following:

- Erect the scaffold in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Inspect all components of the scaffold for damage.
  - Report damaged components to the qualified person.
  - Do NOT use damaged components when erecting the scaffold.

### Inspection of Scaffolds

Before working on the scaffold, it should be inspected by a qualified person. After the inspection has been completed, the qualified person should tag it in accordance with the production company's policies and procedures. Do NOT climb on scaffolding that has failed inspection. Scaffolds that have failed inspection should have a red tag.

### Working on the Scaffold

When you and coworkers are working on the scaffold, you should do the following:

- Only allow trained and authorized cast and crew members to be on the scaffold.
- Only use the designated access points to ascend and descend the scaffold. Access points may include:
  - Fixed ladders
  - Walkways
  - Stairway towers
  - Manlifts
- Maintain three points of contact when ascending and descending ladders.
  - If you need tools or equipment up on the scaffold, you should have someone hand or hoist you what you need.
- Make sure that all required guardrails and toeboards are in place and properly secured.
  - Guardrails should be installed on open sides and ends of platforms that are 7 1/2 feet or higher.
  - If you notice missing guardrails or toeboards, notify either your supervisor or the designated qualified person.
  - If the scaffold will be used for a stunt and guardrails had to be removed, stunt performers and actors should speak with stunt and safety coordinators about what precautions need to be followed while on the scaffold.
- Be aware of your surroundings.





# ENTERTAINMENT: SCAFFOLD SAFETY (CAL/OSHA)

- Do NOT exceed the load limit of the scaffold.
- Practice proper housekeeping to help minimize slipping, tripping, falling, or falling object hazards.
  - Tools and equipment should be properly stored or secured when not in use.
- Do NOT overreach while performing work on the scaffolding.
- Do NOT work on scaffolds when it is storming or if there are high winds, unless a qualified person has determined that it is safe for you to be on the scaffold and you are using a personal fall arrest system.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, scaffolds are commonly used in the entertainment industry for behind-the-scenes and in front of camera or audience tasks. However, working from a scaffold can be dangerous if certain precautions are not followed. To help minimize the chances of an accident occurring, you should be aware of your surroundings and practice proper housekeeping while on the scaffold. Where actors or stunt performers will be performing on the scaffold, they should speak with both stunt and safety coordinators about any additional precautions that they may need to take. If you have questions about scaffold safety for your production, please speak with your supervisor or designated contact.

