



January 2017 Issue – 69th Edition

OSHA Updates Fall Protection Rules

Fall Protection Options

The rule requires employers to protect workers from fall hazards along unprotected sides or edges that are at least 4 feet above a lower level. It also sets requirements for fall protection in specific situations, such as hoist areas, runways, areas above dangerous equipment, wall openings, repair pits, stairways, scaffolds, and slaughtering platforms. And it establishes requirements for the performance, inspection, use, and maintenance of personal fall protection systems.

OSHA defines fall protection as “any equipment, device, or system that prevents a worker from falling from an elevation or mitigates the effect of such a fall.” *Under the final rule, employers may choose from the following fall protection options:*

- **Guardrail System**— A barrier erected along an unprotected or exposed side, edge, or other area of a walking-working surface to prevent workers from falling to a lower level.
- **Safety Net System**—A horizontal or semi-horizontal, cantilever-style barrier that uses a netting system to stop falling workers before they make contact with a lower level or obstruction.
- **Personal Fall Arrest System**— A system that arrests/stops a fall before the worker contacts a lower level. Consists of a body harness, anchorage, and connector, and may include a lanyard, deceleration device, lifeline, or a suitable combination. *Like OSHA’s construction standards, the final rule prohibits the use of body belts as part of a personal fall arrest system.*
- **Positioning System** – A system of equipment and connectors that, when used with a body harness or body belt, allows a worker to be

supported on an elevated vertical surface, such as a wall or window sill, and work with both hands free.

- **Travel Restraint System** – A combination of an anchorage, anchorage connector, lanyard (or other means of connection), and body support to eliminate the possibility of a worker going over the unprotected edge or side of a walking-working surface.
- **Ladder Safety System** – A system attached to a fixed ladder designed to eliminate or reduce the possibility of a worker falling off the ladder. A ladder safety system usually consists of a carrier, safety sleeve, lanyard, connectors, and body harness. Cages and wells are not considered ladder safety systems.

Rope Descent Systems

The rule codifies a 1991 OSHA memorandum that permits employers to use Rope Descent Systems (RDS), which consist of a roof anchorage, support rope, descent device, carabineers or shackles, and a chair or seatboard. These systems are widely used throughout the country to perform elevated work, such as window washing.

The rule adds a 300-foot height limit for the use of RDS. It also requires building owners to affirm in writing that permanent building anchorages used for RDS have been tested, certified, and maintained as capable of supporting 5,000 pounds for each worker attached. This mirrors the requirement in OSHA’s Powered Platforms standard.

Ladder Safety Requirements

Falls from ladders account for 20 percent of all fatal and lost work-day injuries in general industry. The new rule includes requirements to protect



Safety & Environmental Newsletter

January 2017 Issue – 69th Edition

workers from falling off fixed and portable ladders as well as mobile ladder stands and platforms. (The ladder requirements do not apply to ladders used in emergency operations or ladders that are an integral part of or designed into a machine or piece of equipment).

In general, ladders must be capable of supporting their maximum intended load, while mobile ladder stands and platforms must be capable of supporting four times their maximum intended load. Each ladder must be inspected before initial use in a work shift to identify defects that could cause injury.

Fixed Ladders – Fixed ladders are permanently attached to a structure, building, or equipment. These include individual-rung ladders, but not ship stairs, step bolts, or manhole steps. *The new rule phases in a requirement for employers to have ladder safety or personal fall arrest systems for fixed ladders that extend more than 24 feet, and phases out the use of cages or wells for fall protection under the following timeline: Starting in two years (November 2018), all new fixed ladders and replacement ladder/ladder sections must have a ladder safety or personal fall protection system. For existing ladders, within two years (November 2018), employers must install a cage, well, ladder safety system, or personal fall arrest system on fixed ladders that do not have any fall protection. Within 20 years (November 2026), all ladders extending more than 24 feet must have a ladder safety or personal fall arrest system.*

Portable Ladders – Portable ladders usually consist of side rails joined at intervals by steps, rungs, or cleats. They can be self-supporting or lean against a supporting structure. The final rule will be easier for employers and workers to understand and follow because it uses flexible

performance-based language instead of detailed specification and design requirements. *Under the revisions, employers must ensure that: rungs and steps are slip resistant; portable ladders used on slippery surfaces are secured and stabilized; portable ladders are not moved, shifted, or extended while a worker is on them; top steps and caps of stepladders are not used as steps; ladders are not fastened together to provide added length unless designed for such use; and ladders are not placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain added height.*



Training Requirements

The rule adds a requirement that employers ensure workers who use personal fall protection and work in other specified high hazard situations are trained, and retrained as necessary, about fall and equipment hazards, including fall protection systems. A qualified person must train these workers to correctly: identify and minimize fall hazards; use personal fall protection systems and rope descent systems; and maintain, inspect, and store equipment or systems used for fall protection.

When there is a change in workplace operations or equipment, or the employer believes that a worker would benefit from additional training based on a lack of knowledge or skill, then the worker must be retrained. The training must be



January 2017 Issue – 69th Edition

retrained. The training must be provided in a language and vocabulary that workers understand.

Timeline

Most of the rule will become effective 60 days after it is published in the Federal Register, but some provisions have delayed effective dates, including:

- Ensuring exposed workers are trained on fall hazards (6 months),
- Ensuring workers who use equipment covered by the final rule are trained (6 months),
- Inspecting and certifying permanent anchorages for rope descent systems (1 year),
- Installing personal fall arrest or ladder safety systems on new fixed ladders over 24 feet and on replacement ladders/ladder sections, including fixed ladders on outdoor advertising structures (2 years),
- Ensuring existing fixed ladders over 24 feet, including those on outdoor advertising structures, are equipped with a cage, well,

- personal fall arrest system, or ladder safety system (2 years), and
- Replacing cages and wells (used as fall protection) with ladder safety or personal fall arrest systems on all fixed ladders over 24 feet (20 years).

Additional information

Additional information on OSHA's rule on walking-working surfaces and personal fall protection systems can be found at www.osha.gov/walking-working-surfaces. OSHA can provide extensive help through a variety of programs, including technical assistance about effective safety and health programs, workplace consultations, and training and education.

For more information on other safety-related issues impacting workers, to report an emergency, fatality, inpatient hospitalization, or to file a confidential complaint, contact your nearest OSHA office, visit www.osha.gov, or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.

Traffic Security/Safety Reminders and Updates

PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALKS:

You are reminded that any pedestrian approaching or in a crosswalk has the right of way. Drivers must come to a complete stop when a pedestrian crossing the roadway in a crosswalk is: on the half of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling; or approaching from an adjacent lane on the other half of the roadway.

CENTER SPEED LIMITS:

Wallops Main Base speed limits are 30 mph for roadways unless otherwise posted and 15 mph for all parking areas. On Wallops Island and the causeway, no speed limit is higher than 40 mph. Drivers must be aware of and obey posted speed limits while traveling in any of these areas.

STOP SIGNS:

State vehicle laws mandate a complete stop at stop signs and red lights.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS:

Parking is not authorized in fire/safety areas at any time. Fire/safety areas, loading docks and spaces





January 2017 Issue – 69th Edition

reserved for persons with disabilities are subject to enforcement 24 hours a day. Other reserved and timed spaces are subject to enforcement during regular duty hours (6:00am-6:00pm Monday through Friday). Timed spaces are intended to be used by individuals visiting a building, not by the building's occupants and never should be used to park a car longer than the time marked on the ground.

MANDATORY SEAT BELT USE:

State law requires the use of seatbelts by all occupants of a motor vehicle during operation.



CELL PHONE USE AND TEXTING WHILE DRIVING:

NASA Procedural Requirement 8715.3C, Subject: NASA General Safety Program Requirements, states that drivers shall not use hand-held communication devices while the vehicle is in motion. The only exception to this is for emergency, security, and fire vehicles during official operation. This definition of hand-held devices includes; cell phones, UHF radios, or other hand-held wireless communication devices.

DISPLAY OF NASA/GSFC BADGES:

Employees and visitors are required to prominently display their NASA or GSFC badge at or above the waistline while on the Center.

BICYCLE OPERATION:

Virginia law recognizes bicycles as vehicles. Bicyclists are authorized users of the roadway, and bicyclists have rights-of-way and the same duty to obey all state traffic laws.

Upcoming Training

February 8: CPR/AED Training, SATERN #86202, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm in E-104 If you have any questions, please contact Chief Jim Atkins at james.m.atkins@nasa.gov or 757-824-2487

February 28: ESD Control Operator, SATERN #85629 08:30 am – 1:00 pm in E-104 If you have any questions, please contact Julio Diaz-Perez at julio.c.diazperez@nasa.gov or 757-824-2282

The following course has been added to your SATERN Learning Plan and the course content is now available online for you to take and get completion credit:

Course Title: **Job Hazard Analysis**
Course ID: **SMA-OS-WBT-239**

Safety Awareness Campaign (Spring 2017)

This year's Safety Awareness Campaign is a full day event with keynote speaker, safety sessions throughout the day and safety demonstrations.

When: Wednesday, May 3, 2017 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where: E-100 Auditorium and E Buildings Conference Rooms

Watch for schedule of events coming soon.





Safety & Environmental Newsletter

January 2017 Issue – 69th Edition

Water Line Breaks

An accumulation of wear on underground drinking water lines eventually leads to a water line break. Water line breaks occur most frequently in the winter due to rapid fluctuations in ground temperature, although they can occur at any time of the year. Signs of a water line break include an unusual pooling of water on the ground surface, which migrates to the surface from the broken pipe, and resultant loss of pressure in nearby buildings. If a water line break is suspected and repairs must be undertaken, water consumption in the affected buildings is restricted and the suspected area is then excavated in an attempt to locate the break in the water line.

During the time the water line break is repaired, and for approximately 48 hours following the repair, buildings served by the water line will be posted with signs informing building occupants not to drink the water. This is a precaution. Once the break is repaired, the line is super chlorinated to kill any pathogens that could have been introduced into the water lines. At this point, the drinking water in the buildings SHOULD be safe to use; however, in accordance with Virginia Department of Health policy, water use in the affected buildings is still restricted until two consecutive bacteriological samples, taken 24 hours apart, verify the absence of pathogenic bacteria.

If you suspect that a line break has occurred, [please contact the WICC Help Desk](#). If you have questions concerning your drinking water quality, please contact Owen Hooks at x1941.

2017 Environmental Management System (EMS) High Priorities

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

NATURAL RESOURCES

Celebrate Earth Day on February 15 in Building E-100 11:00 to 1:00

Visit Building E-100 on February 15, 2017, from 11:00 –1:00 to prepare yourself to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC).

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the GBBC encourage citizens to observe birds in their backyard during the February 17 – 20 weekend for at least 15 minutes and to log the results at <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>. Last year more than 160,000 people from 130 countries participated.

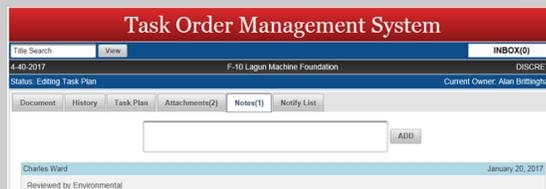
WFF's celebration will include:

- Speakers
 - Decoy Carvers
 - Photo Contest
 - and much more
- Keep looking for more details.



WICC II Environmental Task Review

When tasks are submitted through the Wallops Institutional Information Management System (WIIMS) for estimating, they are subjected to various areas of review before approval may be obtained. In 2016, the WFF Environmental Office (EO) implemented an Environmental Task Review module within the WIIMS database in order to provide effective and timely environmental review. This module provides an avenue for environmental review of all task orders entered into the WIIMS database. By implementing this feature within the WIIMS database, the EO is able to evaluate the environmental impacts of task orders and either provide environmental approval or request additional information. The WIIMS generates an automatic email to the task originator which also appears in the Notes section of the task order. All environmental review is performed independent of the task approval process and will not delay the Contracting Officer approval.



Remember, early notification to the EO is often critical to timely implementation of projects and missions. Many WFF projects require regulatory permits and/or approvals from state and federal agencies prior to the start of the project or the purchase of large equipment. Project delays may result if environmental permits and regulatory consultations are not addressed early in the project planning phase.

Please contact Shari Miller at x2327, if you have questions regarding the WIIMS Environmental Task Review or to discuss regulatory permits related to your project.