



# General Safety for Narrow Frame Scaffolds

Narrow frame scaffolds, also known as Baker/Perry style scaffolds, are among the most popular pieces of construction equipment. Many contractors use them instead of ladders because they allow workers to maintain their balance and work more easily from the platform.

A narrow frame scaffold has wheels and is often used as a mobile scaffold with the end frame measuring 3 feet or less in width. Designed to be easily moved, they are used for operations such as painting, drywalling and other jobs where workers must frequently change position. Scaffolds can be adapted to stairs, ramps and other uneven surfaces.

Always follow the manufacturer's operating instructions and ensure they are easily accessible. The tips below address general safety requirements, not scaffold design or engineering. For complete regulatory information on scaffolds refer to Cal/OSHA Title 8 Sections 1637-1667.

Your company's code of safe practices must include safety requirements for proper use, maintenance and inspection of narrow frame scaffolds. Your injury and illness prevention program must provide information on scaffold inspection, training and hazard correction.

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In many instances, scaffolds may be a better and safer choice than ladders.

## Common Narrow Frame Scaffold Hazards

Narrow frame scaffold hazards include, but are not limited to:

- Missing guardrail or mid-rail
- Wheels that do not have locking devices
- Moving the rolling scaffold with employees on it; tip overs
- Employees climbing on or over guardrail
- Improperly maintained scaffold; structural failure
- Accessing the scaffold improperly
- Working near electrical



## Safe Work Practices

- Follow the manufacturer's allowable load for the casters and scaffold components and platforms and use recommended bracing to ensure a rigid and structurally sound scaffold.
- Assess the work area, site conditions and work to be performed.
- Ensure floor or surface on which a rolling scaffold can be moved is within three degrees of level, there are no pits, holes or obstructions, and the surface is able to withstand the superimposed point loading of the casters supporting the scaffold and workers.
- Conduct a pre-operation inspection to verify that all scaffold components are functioning properly and/or are correctly assembled.
- Keep the platform free from tripping hazards, such as hand tools, equipment or other materials.
- Lock scaffold wheels with positive wheel and/or wheel and swivel locks to prevent movement while in use.
- Use guardrails that include top rails, mid-rails and toe boards.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from energized power lines.
- If outriggers are installed, deploy installed outriggers on both sides of the scaffold. All locking pins must be engaged before using the scaffold.
- Never modify or alter the scaffold.
- No employee is to remain on the scaffold while it is being moved (unless under strict conditions as covered in training criteria).

Common accidents occur when there are missing guardrails and unsecured wheels.

### Quick Scaffold Inspection

#### Make sure:

- ✓ Component parts are not missing/damaged
- ✓ Guardrails/toe boards are not missing
- ✓ Wheel locks are working properly
- ✓ Platform surface is dry; no debris
- ✓ There is clearance from electric lines
- ✓ There are no overhead obstructions
- ✓ The scaffold is level

## Training Employees on Proper Use of Narrow Frame Scaffolds

Only trained and authorized persons should be allowed to use a scaffold. Training must be provided by a qualified person who recognizes the hazards associated with the type of scaffold being used and understands the procedures to control or minimize these hazards.

Training should follow the safe operating procedures provided in the narrow frame scaffolds operations manual. It should also include, but not be limited to:

- How to safely use the scaffold and determine the maximum load limits when handling materials
- How to recognize and avoid scaffolding hazards, such as electric shock, falls from height and being hit by falling objects
- How to move, operate, maintain and repair scaffolds
- Not to stand on the guardrail or any components of the scaffold
- Not to use stepladders, buckets, boxes or barrels inside the scaffold to gain additional standing height
- Not to pull yourself from one location to another while standing on the platform
- Not to use the scaffold if it is incomplete, broken or has missing or ill-fitting parts that need replacement
- Not to move the scaffold with worker(s) on it when:
  - The worker(s) on the scaffold is unaware of the move and/or the surface under the scaffold is not within three degrees of the level and free of pits, holes or obstructions
  - The worker is on any part of the scaffold which extends outward beyond the wheels, casters or other supports
  - Manual force is not being applied as close to the base as practicable. Manual force must be applied not more than 5 feet above the supporting surface.
  - The height-to-base width ratio of the scaffold during movement is greater than 2-to-1

Employers must retrain employees when inadequacies are observed or an employee lacks the skill or understanding to work on or around scaffolding equipment.

## Inspecting Narrow Frame Scaffolds Prior to Use

Daily pre-use inspection of the narrow frame scaffold should be performed by qualified or authorized persons before each work shift. Inspections should be documented. If there are deficiencies, they must be corrected prior to working on the scaffold.

