



Fall Protection – Catwalk Safety

Catwalks are walkways that provide access to technical and service areas located above the stage or auditorium. They may also provide a bridge linking fly-floors. These elevated work surfaces pose fall hazards. Falls from the catwalks can result in serious debilitating injuries and death.



Catwalk Requirements

1. Secure rigid guardrails capable of supporting a live load of 20⁷ pounds per linear foot applied either horizontally or vertically downward at the top rail.
2. A top rail and mid rail; top rail height of 42 inches to 45 inches from the upper surface catwalk flooring and mid rail approximately halfway between the top rail and the catwalk floor.
3. The vertical support posts must have a 1.5 inch outside diameter or larger, and the spacing must be 8 feet or less.
4. Toeboards to prevent items being kicked over the side.

Guidelines

1. Only trained and authorized personnel may access and work on or from the catwalks.
2. Complete fall protection training prior to accessing the catwalks.
3. Remove all loose items from your pockets prior to ascending to the catwalk.
4. Tie-off or otherwise attach all tools to your person prior to ascending to the catwalk.
5. Take a hard hat up to the catwalk with you when the catwalk is known to have low head clearance areas.
6. Strap the hard hat to your head once you reach the catwalk to prevent dropping it as you work.
7. Use a fall protection system when the work requires you to lean over or through the catwalk guardrails to access the equipment on which you are working.
 - a. Inspect all components of the fall protection system prior to each use.
 - b. Wear a full body harness that has the D-ring attachment at the back.
 - c. Ensure the lanyard is attached to an anchoring point that is capable of supporting 5,000 pounds. Contact the EH&S Department if you are unsure of the anchoring points.
 - d. Choose an anchor point that is close to and behind you.
 - e. Ensure all connections are secure, and the connections closed and locked.
 - f. Never allow the lanyard to cross the front of your body or wrap around your arm or leg.

⁷ CCR Title 8, GISO Section 3209 provides these requirements for permanent structures. When constructing temporary guardrails, follow CCR Title 8, CSO, Section 1620 (4)(c), which requires all railings, including their connections and anchorage, to be capable of withstanding without failure, a force of at least 200 pounds applied to the top rail within 2 inches of the top edge, in any outward or downward direction, at any point along the top edge.

8. Ensure personnel have been removed from the area beneath you prior to adjusting equipment that extends over the catwalk guardrails.
9. Never use wooden planks, bars, ladders, or other devices to increase your height above the floor of the catwalk.
10. Never use wooden planks to create 'catwalks' across open spaces or areas not designed to be weight bearing, such as the ceiling above the audience.
11. Never leave loose tools or materials on the catwalk.
12. Never stack counterweights above the level of the toeboards.
13. Ensure adequate lighting is available on the catwalk; use a flashlight attached to your hard hat if necessary.
14. Never participate in horseplay on the catwalks; never throw items from the catwalks to the surfaces below.
15. Never remove the catwalk rails unless secured with appropriate fall protection equipment that is properly installed.
16. Always replace catwalk rails after removal to load items onto the catwalk.
17. Conduct routine inspections and immediately report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor or instructor.