



Fall Protection – Paint Frames

Paint frames move through large floor openings from one level of the scene shop to another. The floor opening allows the paint frames to move vertically giving access to all areas of large backdrops and scenery pieces.



The ability to move the canvas up and down reduces the risk of falls by reducing the need to use ladders to access the upper reaches of the canvas. However, the floor opening in the floor through which the paint frame moves poses trip/fall and fall hazards that could result in serious debilitating injuries or death.

There are two Cal-OSHA regulatory definitions that may apply to the opening for a paint frame system. A “floor hole” is defined as any opening measuring 12 inches or less in the least horizontal direction through which materials but not persons may fall. A “floor opening” is defined as an opening measuring 12 inches or more in its least dimension through which persons may fall. In both cases, floor holes and floor openings require either guardrails or covers to be in place to prevent tools or materials from falling into them and to prevent injuries to individuals working near the openings. In cases where guardrails or covers are removed and a fall risk is present, a fall protection system (harness, lanyard, anchor point, etc.) must be used to mitigate this risk.

Safe Use Guidelines

1. Participate in fall protection training prior to working on or around the paint frame.
2. Keep the guardrails located in front of the paint frame floor hole in place at all times.
3. Never store items against the wall located behind the paint frame floor hole.
4. Keep the paint frame lowered to its lowest position when it is not in use.
5. Keep the covers/guards in place over the paint frame floor hole, where floor opening covers/guards are available, when the paint frame is not being used.
6. Wear approved fall protection when the guardrails are removed and the paint frame floor hole is exposed without the use of appropriate weight bearing covers/guards.
7. Require personnel working on the lower paint frame level(s) to wear hard hats when others are working on the floor above.
8. Never climb on the guardrails to gain access to a higher point on the canvas.
9. Never use a ladder on the upper paint frame level to gain access to a higher point on the canvas.
10. Never store items against the guardrails as they may fall through the floor opening and injure personnel on the lower level.
11. Check with the EH&S Department to determine if the lower level of the paint frame is a confined space and what steps, if any, must be followed to enter this level.

Talk to your supervisor if you have any questions about this information.