



## CODE OF SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINE FOR SUPPORTED SCAFFOLDING EQUIPMENT DEVELOPED FOR INDUSTRY BY THE ACCESS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (AAC)

It shall be the responsibility of all users to read and comply with the following recommended guidelines which are intended to promote safety in the erecting, dismantling, alteration, and use of Supported Scaffolding Equipment.

### I. SAFE SCAFFOLD USE

1. Prior to use, inspect scaffold to ensure it has not been altered and is in a safe working condition regardless of what the tag might state.
2. Erected scaffolds and platforms should be inspected regularly by those using them prior to each work shift and after any occurrences that may alter the scaffold from a safe condition.
3. Exercise caution when entering or exiting a work platform.
4. Do not overload scaffold. Follow the manufacturer's safe working load recommendations and design.
5. Do not jump onto platforms.
6. Do not use ladders or makeshift devices to increase the working height of a scaffold. Do not plank guardrails to increase the height of a scaffold.
7. Use proper access.
8. In certain jurisdictions, unless a safety net or travel restraint system is being used, workers shall wear fall arrest systems if the workers may fall more than a specified height. Refer to provincial/territorial requirements.
9. Never mix scaffold frames and accessories that have been manufactured by different companies, unless all parts fit perfectly together and have been designed to the same capacity to ensure the integrity of the scaffold is never compromised.
10. It is dangerous to construct a scaffold close to power lines. Always consult the power company for specific guidelines and conform to all applicable codes.

### II. SUPPORTED SCAFFOLD ASSEMBLY AND USE GUIDELINES

- A. Always construct scaffolds on prepared **foundations**. Ensure footings, sills, or supports are capable of supporting double the anticipated maximum load without settlement.
- B. Any part of a **building** or **structure** that is used to support the scaffold shall be capable of supporting the maximum intended applied load and must be verified by a professional engineer.
- C. Do not extend **screw jacks** (adjustable bases) beyond manufacturer recommended maximums. Always use adjustable bases with system scaffolds and other components that the manufacturer recommends where possible.
- D. Level the **base** by starting at the highest point of ground level and ensure accuracy, as to not have to level the scaffold after the base has been completed.
- E. **Sway or façade bracing** should be installed on the outside face of the scaffold to full height and can be either in one single bay or extended across multiple bays. If single-bay bracing is selected it must be in both end bays and longitudinally.
- F. Install **plan bracing** (horizontal diagonal) on any scaffold towers that are not planked/ decked or restrained in torsion.
- G. Ensure scaffolding has a **lateral tie connection**. Where possible, use push/pull ties, ensuring that the tie tube is connected to both standards (or both ledgers near the standard) with right angle clamps. Tie tubes should be installed on the same bay as the internal bracing. If it is not possible to tie the scaffold to a structure, a professional engineer must provide special design considerations.



- H. The work platform must consist of a fully **planked/decked** surface and shall have **guardrails** consisting of top rails, mid rails, and toe boards installed on all open sides. Toeboards shall be installed at the edge of all work platforms.
- I. **Guardrails** must be installed on all open sides of the scaffold where a person can fall and should be positively connected to the standards. Midrails shall be installed equal distant between the guardrail and the platform.
- J. Always use select **structural wood plank**, LVL (laminated veneer lumber) or equivalent approved lumber, of uniform thickness.
- K. Ensure that **pre-manufactured steel, aluminum, and marine board planks** have a nonskid surface and the load capacity rated by the manufacturer is not exceeded. Always ensure that the supporting hook is in place with wind lock in the closed position.
- L. Ensure **ladders**, ladder cages, and rest platforms, when installed on scaffolds, conform to all applicable codes. Always maintain 3- point contact when climbing.
- M. **Modular stairways** are used to gain access to working platforms and must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- N. Do install **side brackets** at right angles to the scaffold in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Only use brackets as an extension for access work platforms.
- O. Do not use **side brackets** for material storage.
- P. **Cantilever** platforms, except fabricated side brackets, must be designed by a professional engineer and shall be installed in accordance with supplier's/ manufacturer's instructions.
- Q. Do obtain a stamped engineer design drawing for scaffold with tarpaulins or any **enclosure** system attached (this imposes additional wind loading).

### III. SYSTEM SCAFFOLD

- A. Always check the prefabricated **standard capacity** based on minimum and maximum vertical brace configurations from the manufacturer's manual and if necessary, seek approved engineered drawings.
- B. Do follow loading criteria from the manufacturer's manual to determine **optimal bay size**. Ensure ledgers are connected to standards at the desired lift height by positive connection.
- C. Do not exceed **vertical spacing or lift height** between ledgers beyond 2m (6'-6") in both directions.
- D. Do use **double ledgers** or equivalent where point loads or Uniformly Distributed Loads (UDLs) exceed single ledger capacities.
- E. Do use correct **bracing sizes** to correspond to bay sizes. Internal braces must be braced at a minimum of every third bay and extend the full height of scaffold.
- F. Do introduce top chord, bottom chord, and plan bracing as required where trusses and large clear spans are required.

### IV. TUBE AND CLAMP SCAFFOLD

- A. Tube and clamp shall be of aluminum or steel tubes that are a min. of 1.9" O.D.
- B. The spacing of tubes acting as vertical standards is dependent upon the loading to be imposed on the scaffold. Always check loading requirements and, if necessary, seek approved engineered drawings.
- C. Ensure that standards are located securely on base plates and are plumb. Joints in standards should be made with end-to-end or internal spigot clamps, and where possible, clamps should be staggered so that they do not occur in the same level.
- D. Connect the ledgers to the standards with right angle clamps and ensure that they are level. Joints in ledgers should be made with end-to-end clamps only, should occur as close to the standard as possible, and are staggered in alternate bays.



#### v. ROLLING SCAFFOLD

- A. Only use rolling scaffold on suitable ground/ hard level surfaces. Identify all hazards or obstructions in the travel path of the scaffold when moving from one location to another.
- B. Do not exceed a height to base ratio of 3:1 (from smallest base dimension) to prevent overturning.
- C. Do not roll scaffold with workers on platforms and without sufficient assistance.
- D. Do not move scaffold without removing or securing loose material on platform.
- E. Do not push or pull rolling tower from the top – move only from the base.
- F. Do secure plain stem casters to frames or bases with pins, or other acceptable means.
- G. Do not climb or work on scaffold without locking casters in place when stationary.
- H. Lock all wheels/ casters to prevent wheel rotation and scaffold movement when using scaffold.
- I. Ensure all castors are from the same manufacturer, are the same size and diameter and can support designated loads.
- J. Ensure both horizontal and vertical components are secured in place to prevent separation from one another.
- K. Do not add side brackets or other platform extensions without compensating for overturning at base.
- L. Use outriggers where appropriate to extend base dimensions.
- M. Install plan bracing at the base and lateral bracing horizontally and diagonally where levels are not decked.
- N. Ensure all planks/ decking is cleated, secured, and prevented from lateral movement and uplift.
- O. Where possible, always provide and use built in ladders for platform access.

#### vi. FRAME SCAFFOLD

- A. Always construct scaffolds on prepared **foundations**. Ensure footings, sills or supports are capable to support double the anticipated maximum load without settlement.
- B. Always use adjustable **bases** and ensure that these are centered and spiked to the wood sill.
- C. **Frame spacing** is dependent upon the loading to be imposed on the scaffold. Always check loading requirements and, if necessary, seek approved engineered drawings.
- D. Ensure that each frame is located securely on the adjustable base and that it is level and plumb. Joints in frames must be made with internal coupling pins, which must be secured with locking pins or lock arms.
- E. **Connect** frames by cross braces with predetermined lengths to coincide with the frame spacing. Each cross brace should be connected to the frame and must be secured to the frame by a positive connection.

#### vii. GUIDELINES FOR DISMANTLING

- A. Inspect the entire scaffold to ensure that it has not been structurally altered in any way that would deem it to be unsafe. If necessary, make alterations to make it safe and check that all scaffold ties are in place.
- B. Visually inspect all planks/ decking prior to removal and ensure that they are not damaged and are safe to use.
- C. Do not remove any scaffold component without due consideration for the effect on the total scaffold when that component is removed.
- D. Never accumulate excess scaffold material on the level (lift) being dismantled as this can cause overloading of the scaffold.
- E. Never remove scaffold ties until the scaffold directly above has been dismantled to the tie level.
- F. If components are seized or jammed, take extreme care when removing them as the sudden release of a component may cause a worker to lose balance.
- G. Lower dismantled material in a controlled manner. Never throw material off the scaffold.
- H. Never leave loose material on the scaffold at the end of shift. Always clear the scaffold platform before leaving the site or ensure that they have been tied down to prevent movement.
- I. When material has been lowered, always stockpile it in an orderly and safe manner.



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BECOME A MEMBER

**IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES, ASK YOUR SUPERVISOR FOR CLARIFICATION.**

**DISCLAIMER:**

*This Code of Safe Practice ("Code") provides some commonsense procedures for safely erecting, dismantling, and using Supported Scaffolding Equipment. As equipment differs, comply with the instructions and procedures of the Supported Scaffolding Equipment supplier and manufacturer(s). As field conditions vary and are beyond the control of the Access Association of Canada and Supported Scaffolding Equipment Committee, safe and proper use of the Supported Scaffolding Equipment is the sole responsibility of the employer and users. The Code provides information on methods of safe use but does not purport to be all-inclusive, or to supplant or replace any manufacturer or other safety and precautionary measures.*

*The information contained herein is to be used as a guide and not intended to replace legislative requirements with respect to the proper use, installation, or maintenance of Supported Scaffolding Equipment, nor the general obligations of parties under applicable occupational health and safety legislation to take every reasonable precaution for the health and safety of workers. The user(s) must refer to such provisions in the applicable legislation. Further, the information provided is believed to be accurate as of the date of publication. In the event of conflict between the Code and all applicable legislation, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, such legislation shall supersede and govern. The Access Association of Canada expressly disclaims all liability as to any results obtained or arising from any use of the product or reliance on such information. The ownership of the copyright for this guide belongs to the Access Association of Canada.*