

Code of Safe Practices for Minimum Guidelines for Selection, Visual Inspection and Use of Wood Scaffold Plank

It shall be the responsibility of all employers and users to read and comply with the following common sense guidelines which are designed to promote safety in the use of wood scaffold planks. These guidelines are not all-inclusive nor do they supplant or replace other additional safety and precautionary measures to cover usual or unusual conditions. If these guidelines conflict in any way with any state, local, provincial or federal statute or governmental regulation, said statute or regulation shall supersede these guidelines and it shall be the responsibility of each user to comply therewith.

Wood scaffold planks are a critical element of any properly erected scaffold structure because they are the surface upon which a worker will stand at an elevated location. Wood by its very nature cannot tolerate abuse. Care must be exercised when handling and using wood planks to avoid damage. In addition, frequent visual inspections will reduce the risk of using damaged planks. The following are general guidelines to assist you in the selection, inspection, and use or rejection of scaffold planks.

A. SELECTION

1. Some factors affecting selection of planks are (a) type of work to be performed, (b) environmental factors, (c) loads that will be imposed on the planks, and (d) spans on which the planks will be used.
2. When selecting solid sawn scaffold planks be sure they are "scaffold grade plank" and are certified by, or bear the grade stamp of, a grading agency approved by the American Lumber Standards Committee at the time of initial purchase.

B. VISUAL INSPECTION

1. Inspect all scaffold planks before and after each use, or more frequently if exposed to hostile environments or overloading.

2. Planks that have been damaged or have deteriorated due to insects, decay, or chemical attack, shall be **REMOVED FROM USE** with the following exceptions:
 - a. Notched planks, or those containing saw kerfs or cracks, may be cut back to shorter lengths to eliminate the hazard.
 - b. Scaffold planks that contain end splits are not necessarily weakened. Planks with end splits may be contained or reinforced by banding or rodding. Refer to OSHA Directive No. 100-84, 3(c).

C. USE

1. Use solid sawn scaffold grade planks in accordance with the rules of the grading authority applicable to the particular plank you are using and in accordance with the current edition of ANSI A10.8.
2. Use manufactured wood scaffold planks in accordance with the load and span tables published by the manufacturer.
3. Follow the "design and use" guidelines set forth in the current edition of ANSI A10.8 and applicable federal, state, provincial and local standards.

Since field conditions vary, and are beyond the control of the Scaffold Industry Association, safe and proper use of wood scaffold planks shall be the sole responsibility of the employer and user. If a scaffold plank shows signs of damage, or if the plank has been subject to conditions that might have caused damage, and after careful inspection you are still in doubt about its strength, **DON'T USE IT!**

Notes
