

§ 1910.23

29 CFR Ch. XVII (7–1–97 Edition)

and orderly and in a sanitary condition.

(2) The floor of every workroom shall be maintained in a clean and, so far as possible, a dry condition. Where wet processes are used, drainage shall be maintained, and false floors, platforms, mats, or other dry standing places should be provided where practicable.

(3) To facilitate cleaning, every floor, working place, and passageway shall be kept free from protruding nails, splinters, holes, or loose boards.

(b) *Aisles and passageways.* (1) Where mechanical handling equipment is used, sufficient safe clearances shall be allowed for aisles, at loading docks, through doorways and wherever turns or passage must be made. Aisles and passageways shall be kept clear and in good repairs, with no obstruction across or in aisles that could create a hazard.

(2) Permanent aisles and passageways shall be appropriately marked.

(c) *Covers and guardrails.* Covers and/or guardrails shall be provided to protect personnel from the hazards of open pits, tanks, vats, ditches, etc.

(d) *Floor loading protection.* (1) In every building or other structure, or part thereof, used for mercantile, business, industrial, or storage purposes, the loads approved by the building official shall be marked on plates of approved design which shall be supplied and securely affixed by the owner of the building, or his duly authorized agent, in a conspicuous place in each space to which they relate. Such plates shall not be removed or defaced but, if lost, removed, or defaced, shall be replaced by the owner or his agent.

(2) It shall be unlawful to place, or cause, or permit to be placed, on any floor or roof of a building or other structure a load greater than that for which such floor or roof is approved by the building official.

§ 1910.23 Guarding floor and wall openings and holes.

(a) *Protection for floor openings.* (1) Every stairway floor opening shall be guarded by a standard railing constructed in accordance with paragraph (e) of this section. The railing shall be provided on all exposed sides (except at entrance to stairway). For infrequently

used stairways where traffic across the opening prevents the use of fixed standard railing (as when located in aisle spaces, etc.), the guard shall consist of a hinged floor opening cover of standard strength and construction and removable standard railings on all exposed sides (except at entrance to stairway).

(2) Every ladderway floor opening or platform shall be guarded by a standard railing with standard toeboard on all exposed sides (except at entrance to opening), with the passage through the railing either provided with a swinging gate or so offset that a person cannot walk directly into the opening.

(3) Every hatchway and chute floor opening shall be guarded by one of the following:

(i) Hinged floor opening cover of standard strength and construction equipped with standard railings or permanently attached thereto so as to leave only one exposed side. When the opening is not in use, the cover shall be closed or the exposed side shall be guarded at both top and intermediate positions by removable standard railings.

(ii) A removable railing with toeboard on not more than two sides of the opening and fixed standard railings with toeboards on all other exposed sides. The removable railings shall be kept in place when the opening is not in use.

Where operating conditions necessitate the feeding of material into any hatchway or chute opening, protection shall be provided to prevent a person from falling through the opening.

(4) Every skylight floor opening and hole shall be guarded by a standard skylight screen or a fixed standard railing on all exposed sides.

(5) Every pit and trapdoor floor opening, infrequently used, shall be guarded by a floor opening cover of standard strength and construction. While the cover is not in place, the pit or trap opening shall be constantly attended by someone or shall be protected on all exposed sides by removable standard railings.

(6) Every manhole floor opening shall be guarded by a standard manhole cover which need not be hinged in place. While the cover is not in place,

the manhole opening shall be constantly attended by someone or shall be protected by removable standard railings.

(7) Every temporary floor opening shall have standard railings, or shall be constantly attended by someone.

(8) Every floor hole into which persons can accidentally walk shall be guarded by either:

(i) A standard railing with standard toeboard on all exposed sides, or

(ii) A floor hole cover of standard strength and construction. While the cover is not in place, the floor hole shall be constantly attended by someone or shall be protected by a removable standard railing.

(9) Every floor hole into which persons cannot accidentally walk (on account of fixed machinery, equipment, or walls) shall be protected by a cover that leaves no openings more than 1 inch wide. The cover shall be securely held in place to prevent tools or materials from falling through.

(10) Where doors or gates open directly on a stairway, a platform shall be provided, and the swing of the door shall not reduce the effective width to less than 20 inches.

(b) *Protection for wall openings and holes.* (1) Every wall opening from which there is a drop of more than 4 feet shall be guarded by one of the following:

(i) Rail, roller, picket fence, half door, or equivalent barrier. Where there is exposure below to falling materials, a removable toe board or the equivalent shall also be provided. When the opening is not in use for handling materials, the guard shall be kept in position regardless of a door on the opening. In addition, a grab handle shall be provided on each side of the opening with its center approximately 4 feet above floor level and of standard strength and mounting.

(ii) Extension platform onto which materials can be hoisted for handling, and which shall have side rails or equivalent guards of standard specifications.

(2) Every chute wall opening from which there is a drop of more than 4 feet shall be guarded by one or more of the barriers specified in paragraph

(b)(1) of this section or as required by the conditions.

(3) Every window wall opening at a stairway landing, floor, platform, or balcony, from which there is a drop of more than 4 feet, and where the bottom of the opening is less than 3 feet above the platform or landing, shall be guarded by standard slats, standard grill work (as specified in paragraph (e)(11) of this section), or standard railing.

Where the window opening is below the landing, or platform, a standard toe board shall be provided.

(4) Every temporary wall opening shall have adequate guards but these need not be of standard construction.

(5) Where there is a hazard of materials falling through a wall hole, and the lower edge of the near side of the hole is less than 4 inches above the floor, and the far side of the hole more than 5 feet above the next lower level, the hole shall be protected by a standard toeboard, or an enclosing screen either of solid construction, or as specified in paragraph (e)(11) of this section.

(c) *Protection of open-sided floors, platforms, and runways.* (1) Every open-sided floor or platform 4 feet or more above adjacent floor or ground level shall be guarded by a standard railing (or the equivalent as specified in paragraph (e)(3) of this section) on all open sides except where there is entrance to a ramp, stairway, or fixed ladder. The railing shall be provided with a toeboard wherever, beneath the open sides,

(i) Persons can pass,

(ii) There is moving machinery, or

(iii) There is equipment with which falling materials could create a hazard.

(2) Every runway shall be guarded by a standard railing (or the equivalent as specified in paragraph (e)(3) of this section) on all open sides 4 feet or more above floor or ground level. Wherever tools, machine parts, or materials are likely to be used on the runway, a toeboard shall also be provided on each exposed side.

Runways used exclusively for special purposes (such as oiling, shafting, or filling tank cars) may have the railing on one side omitted where operating conditions necessitate such omission,

providing the falling hazard is minimized by using a runway of not less than 18 inches wide. Where persons entering upon runways become thereby exposed to machinery, electrical equipment, or other danger not a falling hazard, additional guarding than is here specified may be essential for protection.

(3) Regardless of height, open-sided floors, walkways, platforms, or runways above or adjacent to dangerous equipment, pickling or galvanizing tanks, degreasing units, and similar hazards shall be guarded with a standard railing and toe board.

(d) *Stairway railings and guards.* (1) Every flight of stairs having four or more risers shall be equipped with standard stair railings or standard handrails as specified in paragraphs (d)(1)(i) through (v) of this section, the width of the stair to be measured clear of all obstructions except handrails:

(i) On stairways less than 44 inches wide having both sides enclosed, at least one handrail, preferably on the right side descending.

(ii) On stairways less than 44 inches wide having one side open, at least one stair railing on open side.

(iii) On stairways less than 44 inches wide having both sides open, one stair railing on each side.

(iv) On stairways more than 44 inches wide but less than 88 inches wide, one handrail on each enclosed side and one stair railing on each open side.

(v) On stairways 88 or more inches wide, one handrail on each enclosed side, one stair railing on each open side, and one intermediate stair railing located approximately midway of the width.

(2) Winding stairs shall be equipped with a handrail offset to prevent walking on all portions of the treads having width less than 6 inches.

(e) *Railing, toe boards, and cover specifications.* (1) A standard railing shall consist of top rail, intermediate rail, and posts, and shall have a vertical height of 42 inches nominal from upper surface of top rail to floor, platform, runway, or ramp level. The top rail shall be smooth-surfaced throughout the length of the railing. The intermediate rail shall be approximately halfway between the top rail and the

floor, platform, runway, or ramp. The ends of the rails shall not overhang the terminal posts except where such overhang does not constitute a projection hazard.

(2) A stair railing shall be of construction similar to a standard railing but the vertical height shall be not more than 34 inches nor less than 30 inches from upper surface of top rail to surface of tread in line with face of riser at forward edge of tread.

(3) [Reserved]

(i) For wood railings, the posts shall be of at least 2-inch by 4-inch stock spaced not to exceed 6 feet; the top and intermediate rails shall be of at least 2-inch by 4-inch stock. If top rail is made of two right-angle pieces of 1-inch by 4-inch stock, posts may be spaced on 8-foot centers, with 2-inch by 4-inch intermediate rail.

(ii) For pipe railings, posts and top and intermediate railings shall be at least 1½ inches nominal diameter with posts spaced not more than 8 feet on centers.

(iii) For structural steel railings, posts and top and intermediate rails shall be of 2-inch by 2-inch by ⅜-inch angles or other metal shapes of equivalent bending strength with posts spaced not more than 8 feet on centers.

(iv) The anchoring of posts and framing of members for railings of all types shall be of such construction that the completed structure shall be capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied in any direction at any point on the top rail.

(v) Other types, sizes, and arrangements of railing construction are acceptable provided they meet the following conditions:

(a) A smooth-surfaced top rail at a height above floor, platform, runway, or ramp level of 42 inches nominal;

(b) A strength to withstand at least the minimum requirement of 200 pounds top rail pressure;

(c) Protection between top rail and floor, platform, runway, ramp, or stair treads, equivalent at least to that afforded by a standard intermediate rail;

(4) A standard toeboard shall be 4 inches nominal in vertical height from its top edge to the level of the floor, platform, runway, or ramp. It shall be securely fastened in place and with not

more than ¼-inch clearance above floor level. It may be made of any substantial material either solid or with openings not over 1 inch in greatest dimension.

Where material is piled to such height that a standard toeboard does not provide protection, paneling from floor to intermediate rail, or to top rail shall be provided.

(5)(i) A handrail shall consist of a lengthwise member mounted directly on a wall or partition by means of brackets attached to the lower side of the handrail so as to offer no obstruction to a smooth surface along the top and both sides of the handrail. The handrail shall be of rounded or other section that will furnish an adequate handhold for anyone grasping it to avoid falling. The ends of the handrail should be turned in to the supporting wall or otherwise arranged so as not to constitute a projection hazard.

(ii) The height of handrails shall be not more than 34 inches nor less than 30 inches from upper surface of handrail to surface of tread in line with face of riser or to surface of ramp.

(iii) The size of handrails shall be: When of hardwood, at least 2 inches in diameter; when of metal pipe, at least 1½ inches in diameter. The length of brackets shall be such as will give a clearance between handrail and wall or any projection thereon of at least 3 inches. The spacing of brackets shall not exceed 8 feet.

(iv) The mounting of handrails shall be such that the completed structure is capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied in any direction at any point on the rail.

(6) All handrails and railings shall be provided with a clearance of not less than 3 inches between the handrail or railing and any other object.

(7) Floor opening covers may be of any material that meets the following strength requirements:

(i) Trench or conduit covers and their supports, when located in plant roadways, shall be designed to carry a truck rear-axle load of at least 20,000 pounds.

(ii) Manhole covers and their supports, when located in plant roadways, shall comply with local standard highway requirements if any; otherwise,

they shall be designed to carry a truck rear-axle load of at least 20,000 pounds.

(iii) The construction of floor opening covers may be of any material that meets the strength requirements. Covers projecting not more than 1 inch above the floor level may be used providing all edges are chamfered to an angle with the horizontal of not over 30 degrees. All hinges, handles, bolts, or other parts shall set flush with the floor or cover surface.

(8) Skylight screens shall be of such construction and mounting that they are capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied perpendicularly at any one area on the screen. They shall also be of such construction and mounting that under ordinary loads or impacts, they will not deflect downward sufficiently to break the glass below them. The construction shall be of grillwork with openings not more than 4 inches long or of slatwork with openings not more than 2 inches wide with length unrestricted.

(9) Wall opening barriers (rails, rollers, picket fences, and half doors) shall be of such construction and mounting that, when in place at the opening, the barrier is capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied in any direction (except upward) at any point on the top rail or corresponding member.

(10) Wall opening grab handles shall be not less than 12 inches in length and shall be so mounted as to give 3 inches clearance from the side framing of the wall opening. The size, material, and anchoring of the grab handle shall be such that the completed structure is capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied in any direction at any point of the handle.

(11) Wall opening screens shall be of such construction and mounting that they are capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied horizontally at any point on the near side of the screen. They may be of solid construction, of grillwork with openings not more than 8 inches long, or of slatwork with openings not more than 4 inches wide with length unrestricted.

[39 FR 23502, June 27, 1974, as amended at 43 FR 49744, Oct. 24, 1978; 49 FR 5321, Feb. 10, 1984]