



ARCO SAFE TOOL BOX TALKS

Ladders & Stairways – Stairways

Stairways are a very regularly cited source for OSHA inspectors. They also pose a great hazard, if not properly installed and maintained.

Some of the top Stairway related OSHA standards that are violated include:

- Stairways with four or more risers, or rising more than 30 inches, whichever is less, must have at least one handrail system along each unprotected side or edge
- A stairway or ladder must be provided at all employee access points where there is a break in elevation of 19" or more, and no ramp, runway, sloped bank, or personnel hoist is provided
- Unprotected sides and edges of stairway landings must be provided with guardrails

OSHA has many rules that address design, handrails, and maintenance of stairways:

- Temporary stairways must have landings of not less than 30" in the direction of travel, and extend at least 22" wide at every 12" of effective width
- Proper housekeeping procedures eliminate stairway slip, trip, and fall hazards
 - Keep Stairs free of debris and clutter
- Stair rails must not be less than 36" high from the tread to the top of the stair rail
- Handrails must be between 30" and 37" high measured from the tread surface
- Handrails must provide an adequate handhold to avoid falling
- If the handrail is not permanent, there must be at least a three inch clearance between the handrail and wall
- Temporary stairs must have treads made of wood or other solid material, and must be installed the full width and depth of the stair

