

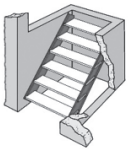
Fatality File

Stairway Collapse



A 64-year-old male employee was fatally injured when the stairway he was standing on collapsed 17 feet (5 meters) to the concrete floor below.

On the day of the incident, the victim was installing a metal kick plate at the top of a steel bolt-in concrete tread stairway. To install the plate, the victim first removed the lag screws from the stairway landing. (*Lag screws aka lag bolts*) are used to connect heavy materials i.e. lumber or metal that are bearing an intense load)



These screws secured the top of the stairway frame, or stringers, to the landing. With the assumption that the stringers were secured at the bottom step, the victim began to remove

the lag screws. The stairwell was NOT secured at the bottom and once he removed the lag screws at the top the stairs shifted and collapsed, and the victim fell 17 feet to the concrete floor below.

During the inspection and investigation of the incident it was determined that the employer did not inspect or evaluate the stairways before work began to determine if they were safe to use and could support the weight of workers.

The employer was cited for failing to have and maintain programs that provided for frequent and regular inspections of the job site, materials, and equipment. Regular inspections could have identified hazards, such as incomplete stairways that were being used by employees.

In addition to employer inspection responsibilities, you must take look out for your own safety and get in the habit of checking your work area and equipment for existing or potential hazards. Report hazards and don't start work until it is safe. Remember, you have a legal right to a safe workplace and to refuse work that is unsafe.

Picture This

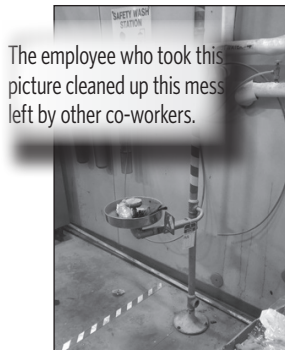
Four Reasons Inspections are Important

You probably looked at these pictures and immediately knew what was wrong and why each situation was unsafe. Unfortunately, the hazards you face each day aren't laid out neatly in front of you and they aren't always easily identifiable. This can be especially true for young workers and workers who lack experience at a job or performing a task.

That's where regular and frequent workplace inspections come in. Workplace inspections are designed to uncover hazards, the obvious and not so obvious kind. Whether it's a formal monthly inspection done by the safety committee or a group of managers and employees, a weekly walk-through by supervisors, or daily checks done by employees and supervisors - inspections uncover hazards and potential hazards.

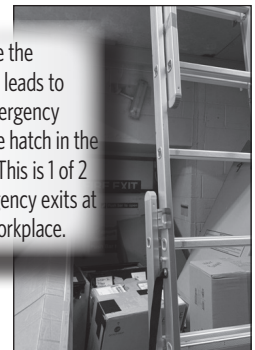
Most employers are required to have an inspection program and process in place. This requirement might fall under a specific piece of legislation or it might be covered under due diligence or the general duty clause.

Your safety depends on workplace inspections and the corrective actions that should be taking place.



The employee who took this picture cleaned up this mess left by other co-workers.

Image Source: Reddit



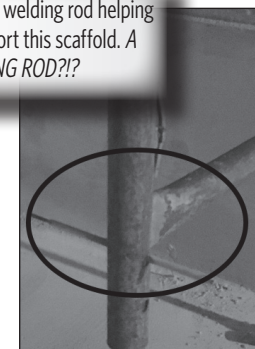
Maybe the ladder leads to an emergency escape hatch in the roof? This is 1 of 2 emergency exits at this workplace.

Image Source: Reddit



The full cylinders are used to prop the door open because they are heavier.

Image Source: Reddit



That's a welding rod helping to support this scaffold. A **WELDING ROD?!?**

Image Source: Reddit

Be A Better Supervisor - Five Ways to Improve Your Safety Inspections

Conducting regular safety inspections is a key component of any workplace safety program. Unfortunately, safety inspection methods leave a lot to be desired at many workplaces. Although the specific details of the inspection process will vary from operation to operation, here are five strategies just about any employer can use to improve inspections.

Hazards

There are numerous hazards and potential hazards at most workplaces. Their severity differs with the workplace and work being performed. Conducting regular inspections and following up with corrective actions can reduce the hazards and potential for injury, illness, property and equipment damage.

Be A Better Supervisor

1. Do Your Own Inspections (Don't Rely Just on Safety Committees)

Internal safety inspections are often the domain of employee safety committees. But they shouldn't be the only inspection game in town. It's important management and supervisors are involved in inspections to lend a more trained eye and focus on the bigger picture, including consistency with the company's overall safety program.

2. Make Sure Inspection Forms Reflect Conditions of Your Workplace

It's important to document all inspections regardless of who carries them out. Although they can be a helpful starting point, generic, boilerplate inspection forms need to be tailored to fit your operations. Other inspection form pointers:

- Make sure forms account for both regulatory requirements and your company's safety program.
- Leave plenty of blank space for comments and observations.
- Make sure it's clear any problems identified must be noted on the inspection forms.

3. Give Advanced Notice of Safety Committee Inspections

Safety committee inspectors are often frustrated by the lack of cooperation from workers and supervisors. Giving advanced notice of inspections goes a long way to solving that problem because it enables supervisors to plan for and minimize disruption caused by having the inspectors in the area, e.g., by manipulating the work schedule so that machines to be inspected are freed up at the appropriate times.

4. Have "Fresh Eyes" Conduct Periodic Inspections

One advantage of having supervisors conduct inspections of their own areas is that they're familiar with the work and hazards and this expertise enhances the inspection process. But there's also something to be said about having "fresh eyes" inspect the workplace. Have supervisors trade off and inspect each other's areas or assemble an inspection teams that include members from outside the department.

5. Instill the Idea that Everyone Is an Inspector

The word "inspection" implies a formal, structured process. But all workers regularly conduct inspections without realizing it. For example, they look over their work stations, PPE, and equipment before starting their shifts. You can leverage this general awareness by instilling in workers the idea that simply being observant and paying attention to their surroundings is a type of inspection.

Final Word

The workplace safety inspection is an opportunity to evaluate the company's whole OHS program. Adopting these five suggestions can go a long way toward making the most out of this opportunity.



Workplan - Conducting Workplace Safety Inspections

Are you regularly doing scheduled workplace inspections? If you're not, you should be and now is a great time to start. Workplace inspections give you a chance to thoroughly evaluate equipment, processes, tasks, tools, and other factors. Regular inspections help you find new hazards, see how existing hazard controls are working, correct or fix issues, and implement new controls (engineering, administrative, PPE) where needed.

Step 1: Decide on Frequency

Regularly inspect operations, equipment, work areas, and facilitates. Frequency requirements can vary between provincial, federal, state, and local regulations (and company requirements), but once a month is a common best practice and a common requirement.

If monthly inspections aren't possible, it is recommended to focus on one or two areas, types of equipment, processes, or tasks a month – and do a full inspection annually.

Step 2: Identify Who Will Perform the Inspections

Often, it is the safety committee's job to conduct inspections, but have members of management and workers who are familiar with an area, process, or task do regular inspections too.

When determining both the frequency of inspections and who will be performing the inspections, think about the number and types of processes that will be inspected.

Review regulatory requirements for equipment such as cranes and fall protection and high hazard activities or processes that require qualified, experienced, and trained personnel perform the inspection. And don't forget about covering all shifts and who will perform inspections on these shifts.

Step 3: Prepare

Make the most of an inspection by taking time to plan and prepare. First, review incident and near miss data to look for trends and hazards. Gather floorplans or layouts of the space and any checklists to be used.

Then, look at past inspections for what hazards were identified and what corrective action was/should have been taken. Gather information on potential hazards – i.e. machines, equipment, materials, areas, tasks, and processes. Brush up on regulatory requirements too.

Next, make sure you've got the right checklist/s for the areas, machinery, or processes being inspected. *Note: update checklists as conditions change – new equipment, new hazards, hazards that have been removed, etc.*

Finally, don't forget PPE for every member of the inspection team.

Step 4: Inspect

Be familiar with common hazard sources, including objects (tools, equipment, containers); activities (driving, lifting, digging, welding, sorting and filling containers); and locations (floors, stairwells, confined spaces, excavations, workstations).

Determine and discuss the inspection route, put on your PPE, and start the inspection. Take notes on what you observe and use those notes, your checklists, and floorplans to document your findings.

Look for deviations from accepted safe work practices such as: equipment missing guards; LOTO procedures not being followed; poor housekeeping; using tools and equipment without proper training or authority and using damaged tools or equipment.

Stop any work that puts workers in immediate danger and don't allow work to begin again until the hazard is fixed. Lastly, don't create a hazard by operating equipment – ask the operator to demonstrate.

Step 5: Write a Report

Put together all the findings, including corrective action plans, into a final report. Be as detailed and specific as possible – using location, equipment name/type, process and what part of the process presents a hazard. Then prioritize which hazards require urgent or immediate fixes. Here's an example of a system you could use:

- ▶ **Class A Hazard:** A condition or practice likely to cause permanent disability, loss of life or body part, and/or extensive loss of structure, equipment or material. *Requires immediate action.*
- ▶ **Class B Hazard:** A condition or practice likely to cause serious injury or illness, resulting in temporary disability or property damage that is disruptive but not extensive. *Requires short-term action.*
- ▶ **Class C Hazard:** A condition or practice likely to cause minor, non-disabling injury or illness, or non disruptive property damage. *Requires a long-term fix.*

Step 6: Follow-Up and Review

Inspections are a great tool for showing you which policies and practices are working and which ones need follow-up and revision. Reviewing available inspection data can help identify trends and situations where training is needed; uncover the reason for an injury trend; and determine which equipment, processes, or work areas need further investigation.

Workplace Safety Inspection Checklist

Instructions: Use and modify this checklist to assist you and your teams during workplace safety inspections.

Location Inspected: _____ Inspection Done By: _____ Date: _____

Housekeeping and General

- Y N Required safety materials posted, accessible, up-to-date.
- Y N Floor surfaces free of water, oil or other fluids.
- Y N Floor surfaces even.
- Y N Walkways/doorways clear of boxes, extension cords, and litter.
- Y N Stairways kept clear of boxes, equipment and other obstacles.
- Y N Work areas, walkways and stairs well lit.
- Y N Work stations tidy and well-maintained.

First Aid, Emergency Equipment, and Signs

- Y N Emergency equipment - i.e. eyewashes, showers, fire extinguishers - clear, inspections up-to-date, good working order.
- Y N First Aid Kits - easily accessible, clearly identified.
- Y N First Aid Kit contents - stocked, contents not past expiration.
- Y N Emergency procedures clearly displayed - including evacuation route for every floor.
- Y N Emergency exits and aisles unobstructed.
- Y N All exits clearly marked and free from obstruction.
- Y N Signs and arrows indicating the direction to exits.
- Y N Location of fire alarms/firefighting equipment clearly marked.

Materials Handling

- Y N Regularly used items in easy reach.
- Y N Enough area around machines and equipment for easy and safe access by people and vehicles.
- Y N Material handling aids available and in good condition.

Storage

- Y N Items placed neatly and securely on shelves.
- Y N Heavy items stored below shoulder height.
- Y N Items on high shelves easily reached, ladder available.

Electrical

- Y N Extension cords secured and in good condition.
- Y N Portable hand tools grounded or double insulated; cord in good condition.

- Y N Machines properly grounded.
- Y N Clear access to electrical panels and no combustible material stored within restricted area around panels.

Machines and Tools

- Y N Guarding and safety devices in place.
- Y N Start/Stop switches clearly marked and easy to reach.
- Y N Safe operating procedures available.
- Y N Lockout procedures available.
- Y N No defective tools in use or in area.
- Y N Manufacturers' manuals available for all tools and machinery.

Chemicals and Hazardous Substances

- Y N Hazardous substances are properly labelled, stored and disposed of properly - i.e. lids on chemical containers, oily rags in metal bins and not in regular trash.
- Y N Safety Data Sheets are available and easily accessible.
- Y N WHMIS or HAZCOM training: safe use and storage of hazardous substances and chemicals - ask worker questions to determine knowledge or need for training.
- Y N Flammable products properly stored.
- Y N Flammable products within permissible quantities.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Y N PPE is available and observed being worn correctly.
- Y N PPE is properly stored and cared for - ask workers questions about care and storage to determine knowledge or need for training.

Security

- Y N Emergency numbers easily available - internal and external.
- Y N Visitor/contractor rules in place.
- Y N Lone worker safety procedures in place.
- Y N Safe money handling procedures in place.

Other

- Y N _____
- Y N _____

By the Numbers 6,098 Reasons to do Workplace Inspections

Here are **6,098** reasons why workplace inspections are important. 6,098 Canadian and U.S. workers died in 2017 from work-related injuries or illnesses.

- **One** worker dies on the job, on average, nearly every day in Canada, according to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada, AWCBC. Add the cancers and longer-term illnesses from occupational exposure, and the number climbs to nearly **1,000**.
- **951** workers died in Canada in 2017 - AWCBC
 - 217 in construction
 - 70 in transportation and storage
 - 160 in manufacturing

- Every **7** seconds a worker in the U.S. is injured on the job - NSC, Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - 510/hour
 - 12,300/day
 - 86,500/week
 - 4.5 million/year
- **5,147** workers were killed on the job in 2017 in the U.S. - Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - 272 unintentional overdoses from nonmedical use of drugs or alcohol at work - 5th consecutive year this number has increased by at least 25%.
 - Over 99 a week
 - Over 14 deaths a day
 - 2,077 transportation-related fatalities
 - 887 fatal falls