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Shipyard Employment: Walking-Working Surfaces and Personal Fall Protection Systems Standard

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

When did the standard go into effect?

The general industry Walking-Working Surfaces and Personal Fall Protection Systems standard became effective on [January 17, 2017](#). Extended compliance dates include:

- Ensuring exposed workers are trained on fall and equipment hazards by May 17, 2017 (§1910.30(a) and (b));
- Ensuring existing fixed ladders are equipped with a cage, well, personal fall arrest system, or ladder safety system by November 19, 2018 (§1910.28(b)(9)(i)(A));
- Installing personal fall arrest or ladder safety systems on new fixed ladders by November 19, 2018 (§1910.28(b)(9)(i)(B)); and
- Ensuring all ladders are equipped with a ladder safety system or personal fall arrest system by November 18, 2036 (§1910.28(b)(9)(i)(D)).

Additionally, for standard stairs installed before January 17, 2017, employers have the flexibility to comply with the rise and tread dimensions of Table D-1 or a combination that achieves angles between 30 to 50 degrees from the horizontal (§1910.25(c)(5)).

What standards apply to shipyard employment?

The general industry standards apply to ship repairing, shipbuilding, shipbreaking, and related employments for conditions, practices, means, methods, operations, or processes that are the same and not specifically covered by 29 CFR Part 1915 (29 CFR 1910.5(c)). The below table focuses on the applicability of 29 CFR part 1910 subparts D and I to shipyard employment.

PART 1910	APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS
§1910.22¹ General	<p>§1915.81 applies to walking-working surfaces used in shipyard employment on shore and on vessels.</p> <p>§1910.22 applies to walking-working surfaces used for general industry operations on shore, where paragraph (b) applies to load limits of walking-working surfaces, including access from dry docks to wing walls (§1915.75(f)) and catwalks on stiles of marine railways (§1915.75(g)). §1915.71 applies to scaffolds and their supports and preempts §1910.22(b).</p> <p>§1910.22(d) applies to the inspection of walking-working surfaces used for shipyard employment on shore and on vessels. The requirements of §§1910.22(d)(2) and (d)(3) that pertain to the repair of walking-working surfaces also applies to shipyard employment on shore and on vessels for ship repair and shipbuilding.</p>

PART 1910	APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS		
<p>§1910.23 Ladders¹</p>	<p>Portable Ladders</p>	<p>Fixed Ladders</p>	<p>Mobile Ladder Stands and Platforms</p>
	<p>§1915.72 applies to portable ladders used for shipyard employment on shore and on vessels. In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • §1915.74 applies to portable straight ladders and portable fixed-tread accommodations ladders used to access vessels afloat; • §1915.76 applies to portable ladders used to access vessel cargo and confined spaces; and • §1915.77 also applies to portable sloping ladders used for working aloft or more than 5 feet above a solid surface on shore and on vessels. <p>§§1910.23(a), (b)(5), (b)(7), (b)(12), (b)(13), and (c)(5) apply to working conditions and hazards related to the use of portable ladders for shipyard employment on shore and on vessels.</p>	<p>§1915.72(a)(1) applies to all fixed ladders on shore and on vessels. In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • §1915.74 also applies to fixed substantial straight ladders and fixed tread accommodations ladders used to access vessels afloat; and • §1915.76 also applies to fixed ladders used to access vessel cargo and confined spaces in shipyard employment with the exception of paragraph (a)(4) that only pertains to ship repair work. <p>On shore, §§1910.23(a), (b), and (d) apply to fixed ladders (except paragraph (b)(10)).</p> <p>On vessels, §§1910.23(a), (b)(7), (b)(8), (b)(9), (b)(11), (b)(12), and (b)(13) apply to the working conditions and the use of fixed ladders.</p>	<p>§§1910.23(b) (except paragraph (b)(11)) and (e) apply to the use of mobile ladder stands and mobile ladder stand platforms on shore and on vessels.</p>
<p>§1910.24 Step Bolts and Manhole Steps</p>	<p>Step bolts are not used in shipyard employment. §1910.24(b) applies to manhole steps on shore. However, paragraph (b)(3) applies to manhole steps on shore and on vessels, requiring their visual inspection before initial use and during each work shift, as well as their maintenance.</p>		

PART 1910	APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS
<p>§1910.25 Stairways¹</p>	<p>On shore, §1910.25 applies to stairways (e.g., fixed, spiral ship, alternating tread-type stairs). §1915.75 applies to permanent stairways between dry dock floors and wing walls, and §1910.25 applies to the hazards and working conditions on those stairways that §1915.75 does not address.</p> <p>On vessels, §1910.25 applies to stairways that are not a permanent part of vessels (e.g., stairs brought in and installed for use during vessel construction, repair or overhaul to support worker access to or within the vessel/vessel section). §1915.75 applies to permanent stairways between floating dry docks and piers or bulkheads and §1910.25 applies to the working conditions and hazards on those stairways that §1915.75 does not address.</p>
<p>§1910.26 Dockboards</p>	<p>§1910.26 applies to the use of dockboards on shore. §§1915.74 and 1915.75 apply on vessels.</p>
<p>§1910.27 Scaffolds</p>	<p>§§1915.71 and 1915.77(c) apply to shipyard employment on shore and on vessels for scaffolding or staging, with the exception of §§1915.71(b)(8), (b)(9), (b)(10), and (c) through (f) that do not apply to shipbreaking.</p> <p>§1910.27(a) applies to working conditions and hazards, applicable to shipyard employment, on shore and on vessels that §§1915.71 and 1915.77(c) do not address.</p>
<p>§1910.28 Fall Protection²</p>	<p>On shore, §1910.28 applies to fall and falling object hazards in shipyard employment, including those on scaffolds that §1915.71 does not address.</p> <p>On vessels, §1910.28 applies to fall and falling object hazards in shipyard employment that §1915.71 does not address, as well as those in ship repair and shipbuilding that §1915.73 does not address.</p>
<p>§1910.29 Criteria</p>	<p>§1910.29 applies on shore for criteria of fall and falling object protection, including those systems used on scaffolds that §1915.71 does not address.</p> <p>§§1915.71, 1915.73, 1915.74, 1915.75, 1915.77, 1915.159, and 1915.160 apply on vessels in shipyard employment as specified by their scope and application. §1910.28 applies on vessels in shipyard employment to criteria for fall and falling object protection that those sections of part 1915 do not address.</p>
<p>§1910.30 Training</p>	<p>§§1915.152(e), 1915.159(d), and 1915.160(d) apply on shore and on vessels for training workers who use personal fall protection. §1910.30 applies to the training of workers who use personal fall protection that those sections of 1915 do not address, as well as on the use of dockboards and designated areas on shore and vessels.</p>

PART 1910	APPLICATION OF THE STANDARDS
§1910.140 Personal Fall Protection	§§1915.151(a), 1915.159, and 1915.160 apply on vessels and on shore, preempting personal fall protection system standards of §1910.140 in its entirety.

¹Design specifications for vessels (including fixed ladders) are addressed on U.S. “Inspected” vessels by U.S. Coast Guard regulations (46 CFR), on foreign flag vessels by foreign standards and various International Vessel Classification Society rules (e.g., Bureau Veritas – France, Det Norske Veritas – Norway, Nippon Kaiji Kyokai – Japan, Lloyd’s Register of Shipping – England), and on “Uninspected” vessels by a variety of standards, recommended guidelines, and established industry practice. Any hazardous conditions that employees are exposed to related to design will be cited using the standard, guidance, or practice, under which the vessel fixed ladders were designed (verify by vessel drawings, documentation, publications, etc.) using the general duty clause.

²In §1915.73(d), where the nature of the work or the physical conditions prohibit the use or installation of guardrails, employers must provide fall protection in accordance with §1915.159 or §1915.160. In addition, employers must provide personal flotation devices in compliance with §1915.158. For shipbreaking operations, §1915.73 does not apply to the guarding of deck openings and edges. Worker exposure to guarding hazards for shipbreaking operations must be addressed by applying §1915.152(b) hazard assessment and equipment. Protection from potential falls (§§1915.159 and 1915.160) and drowning hazards (§1915.158), as appropriate, may also be required.

What resources does OSHA have to assist employers in complying with the standard?

[OSHA’s Final Rule to Update, Align, and Provide Greater Flexibility in its General Industry Walking-Working Surfaces and Fall Protection Standards](#) fact sheet and [Shipyard Employment “Tool Bag” Directive](#) (CPL 02-00-162) provide guidance on the application of OSHA’s general industry standards to shipyard employment. Visit the [walking-working surfaces webpage](#) for additional information.