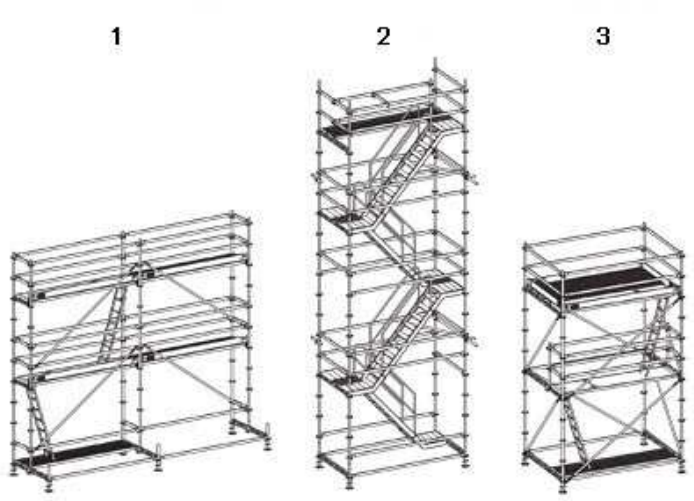
Rolling Towers/Mobile Scaffold: Inspection, Maintenance, and Use Tip Sheet

The most common type of rolling tower/mobile scaffold is simply a single bay supported scaffold tower with casters. Mobile scaffolds may be constructed using tube and coupler scaffold, fabricated frame scaffold or modular type scaffold. As with any supported scaffold, however, it can be configured in many different ways. This tip sheet highlights some of the key items to keep in mind when inspecting, erecting, maintaining, and using mobile scaffold.



Definition of rolling tower/mobile scaffold: A powered or unpowered portable, caster- or wheel-mounted supported scaffold.

Worksite Inspection

Users of rolling tower scaffold must walk around the area in which they will work to remove any materials that may be a hazard to workers as the scaffolds are introduced onto the site. Particular care must be made to note floor hazards such construction debris, holes in the floor, etc. Debris should be removed. Holes should be repaired or workers must work in areas free of such hazards. Rolling tower scaffold must only be used on solid (concrete, etc.), flat floor surface.

Equipment Inspection Prior to Use

The user of rolling tower/mobile scaffold must thoroughly inspect the scaffold prior to use. All components must be complete, functioning properly and correctly assembled. Any incomplete part, missing part, or ill-fitting part should be replace prior to use. Never use rolling tower scaffold without first completely inspecting the unit. Do not intermix components from different manufacturers.

- ☐ Wheels or casters shall be locked to prevent caster rotation and scaffold movement when scaffold is in use.
- ☐ No more than 12 inches of the screw jack shall extend between the bottom of the adjusting nut and the top of the caster.
- ☐ Joints shall be restrained from separation.
- ☐ Do not use brackets or other platform extensions without compensating for the overturning effect.
- ☐ The top platform height as measured from the rolling surface of a rolling scaffold must not exceed four (4) times the smallest base dimension (Some government agencies require a stricter ratio of 3:1).
- ☐ Secure all platforms.
- ☐ The scaffold must be erected with cross, horizontal, or diagonal braces, or a combination of these to prevent racking and provide a rigid structure.
- ☐ The scaffold must be plumb, level and squared with all brace connections securely fastened.
- ☐ The scaffold casters must have positive wheel and swivel locks to prevent movement of the scaffold when it is in use.

☐ The manual force used to move the scaffold must be applied as close to the base as possible, but not more than 5 feet above the supporting surface.

☐ Platforms shall not extend outward beyond the base supports of the scaffold unless outrigger frames or equivalent devices are used to ensure stability.

Equipment Maintenance

- ☐ Platforms must be checked for loose or missing edge banding, holes or thin spots where plywood has been worn. Worn or damaged boards must be discarded and replaced. A platform exposed to excessive heat, as in the case of fire, should be immediately removed from service, destroyed and replaced. Do not use acids or other corrosive substances on platform boards.
- ☐ Pin, spring, and nipple must be lubricated whenever equipment is returned from use. Do not hammer lock pins. If lock sticks, clean then grease lightly. Move the pin back and forth to free movement. If the problem persists, replace the lock.
- ☐ Casters with plain stems shall be attached to the frames or adjustment screws by pins or other suitable means. Casters and wheel stems must be checked for worn or damaged wheels, and missing or damaged snap rings. Wheels should spin freely and bearing races should turn freely and smoothly. Axle, bearing race and stem must be lubricated whenever returned from jobsite. Damaged casters and wheel stems must be discarded.
- ☐ Trusses and guardrail sides must be checked to make sure locking pins are straight and locks are working. Any bent parts should not be used. Pin, spring and nipple must be lubricated whenever returned from job.
- ☐ End frame access ladders and guardrail end frames must be inspected for loose or missing caster bushings and stack pins. Any bent parts should not be used. Caster bushings and stack pins must be lubricated whenever returned from the job site. Damaged ladders and guard rails must be discarded.
- ☐ Do not mix manufacturer platforms, casters, trusses, end frame access ladders, or other components.

During Use

- ☐ Keep the platform free from trip hazards.
- ☐ Do not overreach. Keep your body within the boundaries of the guardrail and scaffold section.
- ☐ Do not allow loose objects and debris to accumulate on the platform.
- ☐ Do not stand on guardrail or use any components of the guardrails to gain additional standing height.
- ☐ Do not jump onto planks or platforms.
- ☐ Do not use ladders, chairs, boxes or makeshift devices to increase the working height.
- ☐ Make sure the unit is free from paint, mud, grease or other slippery or hazardous materials.
- ☐ Never leave the scaffold unattended. If you do leave the scaffold unattended, re-inspect the scaffold prior to using the unit again.
- ☐ Do not over load. Follow manufacturer's safe working load recommendations. Exercise caution when entering or leaving a work platform.

Through the OSHA and Scaffold & Access Industry Association (SAIA) Alliance, SAIA developed this Tip Sheet for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. June 2013.