



YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Procedure #NP543.0, Working at Heights

Application

Procedure #NP543.0, Working at Heights addresses the roles and responsibilities for all individuals whose job requires working at heights, including, but not limited to, the use of step ladders, extension ladders, fixed access ladders, scaffolds, personal platform lifts, scissor lifts, stools, and roof access.

Stakeholder Groups with Responsibilities Under this Policy

- Superintendent of Plant Services
- Plant Services
- Caretaking and Maintenance staff
- Health and Safety
- Purchasing Services
- Principals
- Pre-Qualified Contractors
- All Staff

Relationship to the 2011 Board priorities

The Working at Heights Procedure is directly linked to the Stewardship of Board Resources sections of the Multi-Year Plan and Directors' Annual Plan. This procedure demonstrates accountability for high standards of practice in all Board operations and it speaks to how measures are implemented to improve safety in schools and workplaces.

Plant Services is dedicated to delivering the highest quality service to York Region students, staff and communities through the provision of safe, sustainable learning environments and facilities. Procedures such as Working at Heights are directly related to continuous improvement and legislative compliance.

Implementation Timelines

Immediate

Document History and Previous Versions

Approved March 2007
Revised September 2008
Revised April 2010
Revised March 2012



Board Procedure #NP543.0

Working at Heights

Document Integration Project Format

This procedure outlines the responsibilities for all individuals, whose job requires working at heights, including, but not limited to, the use of step ladders, extension ladders, fixed access ladders, scaffolds, personal platform lifts, scissor lifts, stools, and roof access.

Definitions

Affected Person(s)

Affected persons are all individuals required by classification of their job/contract to work at heights.

Anchor System

An anchor system is a permanently fixed point to attach a fall arrest system typically found on a roof.

Bakers Scaffold

A bakers scaffold is a movable platform that allows for work at heights no more than 1.82 meters (6 feet) from ground level.

Buddy System

A working arrangement in which two individuals will keep in continuous or periodic contact for safety reasons and/or to respond to the emergency needs of the other, such as working on a roof or in a hazardous situation.

Competent Person

A competent person is an individual who;

- (a) is qualified because of knowledge, training and experience to organize work and its performance,
- (b) is familiar with the OSHA and the Regulations that apply to the work, and
- (c) has knowledge of any potential or actual danger to health or safety in the workplace.

Extension Ladder

An extension ladder is a non-self-supporting portable ladder that consists of two or more sections traveling in guides or brackets arranged to permit adjustments in length.

Fall Height

The fall height is the potential distance an individual may fall measured from the underside of an individual's foot to the lowest point at which an individual may end, if they were to fall. An example of this is a ladder being placed at the edge of a stage the fall height would be the distance from the individual's feet on the ladder to the gym floor.

Fall Protection

Fall protection is a process, plan, training program or equipment that minimizes the risk of fall or injury of the worker when working at heights.

Fixed Access Ladder

A fixed access ladder is a ladder that is fixed in the upright position against a wall or structure.

Perimeter Distance

Perimeter distance is the clearance distance that must be kept should an individual have access to an unprotected edge and is exposed to a fall of 2.4 metres (8 feet) or more.

Personal Platform Lift

A personal platform lift is a non-propelled portable elevating work platform that can elevate an individual to above ground level.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment is necessary equipment that is used to work in a safe manner and is required for working with various tools or equipment, such as but not limited to travel restraints, safety belts, or harnesses.

Scaffold

A scaffold is a temporary movable platform for individuals to stand or sit on when working above the ground or floor level.

Scissor Lift

A scissor lift is a self-propelled elevating work platform that can elevate one or more individuals to above ground level.

Stepladder

A stepladder is a self-supporting portable ladder made from aluminum or fiberglass purchased in 1.82 meters (6 feet), 2.43 meters (8 feet), 3.04 meters (10 feet) and 3.65 meters (12 foot) lengths.

Travel Restraint System

A travel restraint system is an assembly of components capable of restricting an individual's movement on a work surface and preventing an individual from reaching a location, from which he or she could fall.

Two-way Communication

Two-way communication is any form of communication between two parties, both of whom can send and receive messages through use of devices such as, but not limited to, two-way radios or cellular telephones.

Responsibilities

The Director of Education shall:

- allocate staff and resources to support the *Working at Heights* procedure.

Superintendent of Plant Services shall:

- provide the necessary resources and direction to support and maintain an effective working at heights procedure; and

- where possible, eliminate the need to work at elevations that present fall hazards by utilizing engineering solutions in the design and retrofit of new and existing facilities.

Plant Services shall:

- develop and maintain standard operating practices for equipment listed in this procedure in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*;
- be authorized to recognize and supervise work performed by contractors that involves work at heights above a fall height of three (3) metres (9.8 feet) that requires the use of fall protection equipment;
- ensure that all Plant Services employees exposed to a fall height of more than three (3) metres (9.8 feet) are equipped with the appropriate fall protection equipment;
- ensure all Plant Services staff who work at heights are trained by Plant Services and abide by the expectations and restrictions in this procedure and relevant standard operating practices as it pertains to their job;
- where physically possible, ensure new construction and/or retrofit of existing facilities engineer solutions that allow for the installation of roof equipment no less than a perimeter distance of 2.4 metres (8 feet) if the fall height is greater than 2.4 metres (8 feet);
- where structural conditions allow, not engage, participate, or assign any work to a contractor(s) that requires the person(s) to be less than a perimeter distance of 1.82 metres (6 feet) from an unprotected edge;
- ensure contractors not work at a fall height of more than three (3) metres (9.8 feet) without verification of appropriate training and fall protection equipment;
- ensure all Plant Services employees at facilities with roof equipment less than a perimeter distance of 1.82 metres (6 feet) and with a fall height of more than 2.4 metres (8 feet) that require constant or regular service or maintenance contact their immediate supervisor for direction before performing any work and follow the safety precautions outlined in this procedure;
- ensure all Plant Services employees assigned to work that requires the use of fall protection equipment are trained and deemed to be competent in the safe use, care, and maintenance of the equipment;
- conduct a periodic review of the training program, update as necessary in consultation with the Health and Safety Department and maintain a database of all trained Plant Services staff;
- provide tool belts and other equipment necessary to Plant Services staff to safely transport the tools or equipment from one level to another while using a ladder;
- ensure equipment used to work at heights by Plant Services staff is purchased through Purchasing Services and is Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved;
- ensure the rental of any equipment for use by Plant Services employees listed in this procedure is through a Board-approved vendor;
- ensure the components of all equipment are inspected by a competent person before and after each use and that defective components are taken out of service immediately;
- ensure permanent roof anchor systems and roof fixed access ladders are inspected and maintained annually;
- investigate the installation of roof anchor points where required;
- not engage or participate in providing any equipment listed in this procedure unless the user has been trained and verified by Plant Services; and
- not engage or participate in providing any of the listed Board owned equipment to non-Board staff except in cases of emergency situations and only if approved by Plant Services.

Caretaking and Maintenance staff shall:

- abide by the expectations and restrictions in this procedure and relevant standard operating practices as it pertains to the job;
- not engage or participate in any work at heights or use any related equipment unless he/she has been adequately trained and verified by Plant Services and is wearing the appropriate personal protection equipment and fall protection equipment;

- maintain two-way communication at all times between individuals performing work on a roof and an authorized individual within the school, so information updates can be provided as required;
- ensure a buddy system is maintained, including assisting maintenance and contracted personnel where required, whenever the need to work from heights is present above a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet) and when on a roof, except in the following situation,
 - where consistent two-way communication is maintained for the duration of time where the task is being performed;
- not work above a fall height of three (3) metres (9.8 feet) unless fall protection equipment is worn and the work is authorized by Plant Services;
- where structural conditions allow, not engage or participate in any work on a roof that requires the individual to be less than a perimeter distance of 1.82 metres (6 feet) from an unprotected edge, if a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet) or greater is present;
- in situations where there is a need to work within 1.82 metres (6 feet) of the unprotected edge, the individual shall contact their immediate supervisor for direction prior to commencing any work;
- observe the following safety precautions when working on a roof;
 - be alert and aware of the surroundings,
 - avoid distractions causing a decrease in concentration,
 - never work with one's back to the unprotected edge,
 - never lean or reach over the unprotected edge, and
 - avoid work during wet and windy weather or when slippery conditions exist;
- only use equipment that is CSA approved and purchased for Plant Services;
- act in a safe and appropriate manner whenever working with, utilizing or accessing any equipment that requires the employee to work at heights;
- for the purpose of painting jobs, only use a bakers scaffold system that limits the worker to working at a height of 1.82 metres (6 feet);
- be trained and authorized to perform work that involves the use of fall protection equipment;
- inspect all components of all equipment before and after each use and report deficiencies to their supervisor;
- not engage or participate in providing any equipment listed in this procedure unless the user has been trained and verified by Plant Services or the Health and Safety Department; and
- not engage or participate in providing any Board owned equipment to non-Board staff except in cases of emergency situations and only if approved by Plant Services.

Health and Safety shall:

- coordinate and/or provide training for all Board employees required to work at heights greater than a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet), with the exception of Plant Services staff; and
- track and maintain training records for all Board employees, with the exception of Plant Services staff.

Purchasing Services shall:

- ensure all pre-qualified contractors are informed and bound to this procedure and related standard operating practices;
- ensure all equipment, as it pertains to this procedure, is purchased through a Board-approved vendor and is CSA approved;
- purchase Type One or Grade A ladders for Plant Services; and
- procure all equipment outlined in this procedure as directed by Plant Services.

Principals shall:

- ensure all staff in their buildings are informed of this procedure and related standard operating practices as it pertains to their job;
- ensure all staff receive annual Health and Safety training on the safe use of stools and ladders;

- ensure any applicable provisions within the Plant Services section be followed when work is authorized to be completed at heights covered by this procedure;
- ensure two-way communication is maintained and information updates are provided to all individuals, including caretaking or maintenance staff or external contractors when performing work on a roof;
- identify staff that may be required to work at heights greater than a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet) and arrange for training by Health and Safety on safe use of ladders and platform lifts; and
- ensure that an adequate supply of CSA approved ladders and stools are purchased for use by staff through Purchasing Services and made readily available.

Pre-qualified Contractors shall:

- ensure their employees and sub-contractors are informed of and abide by this procedure, related standard operating practices, and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* when working at heights on Board property or within Board facilities;
- maintain two-way communication, through the use of Board provided devices, with Board staff when working on a roof to provide information updates as required;
- ensure a buddy system is maintained, whenever the need to work from heights is present above a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet) and when on a roof except in the following situation;
- where consistent two-way communication is maintained with Board staff for the duration of time where the task is being performed; and provide, for their use only, the equipment which meets or exceeds Board requirements for load ratings and safety standards as stated in this procedure and supporting documents.

Staff shall:

- be familiar with and follow the safety precautions in this procedure and related [standard operating practices](#) and abide by its expectations and restrictions;
- not work at heights greater than a fall height of 2.4 metres (8 feet) unless they are trained to use a platform lift; and
- use only CSA approved equipment and purchased through Purchasing Services.

Legislation

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Department

Plant Services

Procedure History

Approved March 2007
 Revised September 2008
 Revised April 2010
 Revised March 2012

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.