Scaffold Safety Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Common scaffold accident injuries

Due to the fact that scaffolds are used to get access to heights that are otherwise too high to reach, most scaffolding accidents result in serious injuries or death.

- Traumatic brain injuries
- Spinal cord injuries
- Amputations
- Broken bones
- Lacerations

2. Scaffolding is a temporary means of support structure which enables workers to reach the required heights while constructing, maintaining, or repairing the existing structures.

3. Important causes of scaffolding accidents include:

- Insufficient or lack of on-the-job training
- Improper construction
- Inadequate fall protection
- Ignoring safety rules
- Weak planking
- Failures at attachment points, parts failure
- Insecure bracing
- Defective equipment
- Changing environmental conditions (extreme temperatures, high winds).

STATS

- According to a recent BLS study, 72% of scaffold accidents can be attributed to 1 of the following 3 causes:
    - Scaffold support or planking gives way due to

defective equipment or improper assembly
    - Slipping or tripping while on a scaffold due to factors such as slippery surfaces or lack of guardrails
    - Falling objects hitting either a worker on a scaffold or those below
- As for the other 28%, scaffold accidents can be caused by:
    - Electrocution as a result of scaffolds and equipment being too close to power or utility lines.
    - Environmental conditions, such as wind, rain, and the presence of hazardous substances.
    - Inadequate fall protection.
    - Collapse of scaffold due to overloading.
- According to recent statistics from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) data, scaffolding accidents at job sites or construction sites account for approximately 80 deaths annually and this comes to over 10,000 injuries a year. All told, 900 construction site fatalities occur every year, according to OSHA. This means that scaffolding accidents alone account for nearly 10% of all construction deaths.
- According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), scaffold-related accidents result in roughly 60 deaths and 4,500 injuries every year. Falls from scaffolds account for roughly 25% of fatal falls from all working surfaces.
- In the United States, roughly 2.3 million construction workers (around 65% of the construction industry) work on scaffolds.