

(Effective until October 1, 2020)

WAC 296-874-20064 Make sure guardrail systems meet these requirements. (1) You must make sure guardrails, if required, are installed along all open sides and ends of platforms.

EXEMPTION: For employees doing overhand bricklaying operations from a supported scaffold, a guardrail is not required on the side next to the wall.

(2) You must make sure the height of the toprail top edge, or the equivalent member, of supported scaffolds is:

(a) At least thirty-six inches (0.9 m) and not more than forty-five inches (1.2 m) above the platform surface for scaffolds manufactured or first placed in service **before January 1, 2000**;

(b) At least thirty-eight inches (0.97 m) and not more than forty-five inches (1.2 m) above the platform surface for scaffolds manufactured or first placed in service **after January 1, 2000**.

(3) You must make sure the height of the toprail top edge, or the equivalent member, of suspended scaffolds that require guardrails and personal fall arrest systems, is at least thirty-six inches (0.9 m) and not more than forty-five inches (1.2 m) above the platform surface.

EXEMPTION: When conditions warrant, the height of the top edge of the toprail may be greater than forty-five inches if the guardrail system meets all other criteria of this chapter.

(4) You must make sure the top edge of the toprail doesn't drop below the required height when the minimum load, shown in Table 3, Minimum Toprail and Midrail Strength Requirements, is used.

(5) Each toprail and midrail, or equivalent member, of a guardrail system must be able to withstand, without failure, the force shown in Table 3, Minimum Toprail and Midrail Strength Requirements, when the force is applied as follows:

(a) To the toprail in a downward or horizontal direction at any point along its top edge;

(b) To the midrail in a downward or horizontal direction at any point.

Note: Midrail includes screens, mesh, intermediate vertical members, solid panels, and equivalent structural members of the guardrail system.

**Table 3
Minimum Toprail and Midrail Strength Requirements**

Type of Scaffold	Toprail Capacity	Midrail Capacity
Single-point adjustable suspension scaffolds	100 pounds (445 n)	75 pounds (333 n)
Two-point adjustable suspension scaffolds		
All other scaffolds	200 pounds (890 n)	150 pounds (666 n)
Walkways within a scaffold		

(6) You must install midrails, screens, mesh, intermediate vertical members, solid panels, or equivalent structural members as follows:

(a) Midrails at a height approximately midway between the top edge of the guardrail system and the platform surface;

(b) Screens and mesh:

(i) From the top edge of the guardrail system to the scaffold platform; and

(ii) Along the entire opening between the supports.

(c) Intermediate members, such as balusters or additional rails, not more than nineteen inches (48 cm) apart.

(7) You must make sure steel or plastic banding is not used as a toprail or midrail.

(8) You must have a competent person inspect manila rope and plastic or other synthetic rope that is used as a toprail or midrail as frequently as necessary to make sure it continues to meet the strength requirements for a toprail or midrail.

Note: Crossbraces may be used as a toprail or midrail in a guardrail system if they meet the following requirements:

1. The crossing point of the two braces is between:

a. 20" and 30" above the work platform when used as a midrail.

b. 38" and 48" above the work platform when used as a toprail.

2. The end points at each upright are not more than 48" apart.

(9) You must make sure guardrails have a surface that prevents:

(a) Puncture and laceration injuries; and

(b) Snagging clothing.

(10) You must make sure any rail extending beyond the post of a guardrail does not create a projection hazard.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050. WSR 15-23-086, § 296-874-20064, filed 11/17/15, effective 12/18/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060. WSR 05-01-054, § 296-874-20064, filed 12/7/04, effective 3/1/05.]