



NYC Department of Buildings  
280 Broadway, New York, NY 10007

Patricia J. Lancaster, FAIA, Commissioner

**Scaffold Worker Safety Update  
FACT SHEET  
January 24, 2008**

### **Background**

In 2006, New York City saw 20 incidents in which individuals working on scaffolds either had to be rescued, suffered injuries, or, as in 6 of the 20 incidents, were killed. In addition, 65% of incidents involved the “C-hook” scaffold type, and 100% of the fatalities involved non-use or misuse of the required safety harnesses.

On November 2, 2006, the Mayor’s Office convened a Task Force to provide recommendations on how to reduce scaffold accidents. The Task Force, chaired by Buildings Department Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, was comprised of a wide range of representatives from federal, state and city governments, immigrant advocacy groups, as well as representatives of workers and contractors involved in the scaffold industry.

### **Task Force Recommendations**

The Task Force submitted 13 recommendations regarding scaffold outreach, training and enforcement:

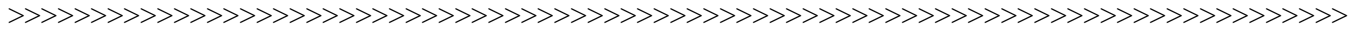
1. Increase penalties for non-compliance with safety rules
2. Standardize inter-governmental procedures and improve coordination
3. Create a scaffold safety unit in the Buildings Department
4. Require daily inspection logs
5. Require the notification of C-hook scaffold use
6. Revamp rigger licensing requirements
7. Create inter-agency training requirements
8. Stagger façade maintenance deadlines
9. Improve access to information on licensed riggers
10. Develop standardized certificate of completion of training
11. Increase training access, participation and completion
12. Widely distribute safety rules and contact information
13. Promote use of 311 to anonymously report unsafe conditions

### **Progress Report**

- ✓ Buildings Scaffold Safety Team created and 100% staffed
- ✓ Uniform certificate of completion of scaffold training created
- ✓ Training curricula currently under revision
- ✓ Joint inspections conducted by Buildings and OSHA
- ✓ Legislation requiring scaffold equipment maintenance logs be kept on sites enacted
- ✓ Legislation increasing and adding new penalties for scaffold safety violations enacted
- ✓ Buildings website improved to make it easier to find information about licensed riggers
- ✓ Information sharing between Buildings and OSHA formalized with an alliance and regular meetings
- ✓ Legislation requiring notification of use of C-hook scaffolds enacted
- ✓ Cross-training held for Buildings inspectors by OSHA compliance officers
- ✓ Monthly OSHA/Buildings incident reporting system in place
- ✓ Intro 550 signed into law, regarding the establishment of rules to stagger required façade inspection cycles

### **Statistics**

- In 2007, there were 6 suspended scaffold accidents on construction sites, 1 of which resulted in a fatality.
- The 1 fatality did not result from a C-Hook scaffold.
- In 2007, suspended scaffold-related accidents on construction sites decreased 40% from 2006.
- In 2007, suspended scaffold-related fatalities on construction sites decreased 83% from 2006.
- The Scaffold Safety Team conducted 1,614 inspections, issued over 600 violations and issued over 500 Stop Work Orders between July 2007 and December 2007.
- Since 2006, Buildings, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and OSHA have conducted 4 outreach sessions across the five boroughs to distribute crucial safety material to day laborers.



**CORRECTION:**

The original fact sheet issued on January 24, 2008 included erroneous numbers. The fact sheet was amended on February 19, 2008 to correct the erroneous numbers. The corrected numbers are reflected in the text above. The original numbers reported can be found below.

**Statistics**

- In 2007, there were 12 suspended scaffold accidents on construction sites, 1 of which resulted in a fatality.
- In 2007, suspended scaffold-related accidents on construction sites decreased 52% from 2006.
- In 2007, suspended scaffold-related fatalities on construction sites decreased 86% from 2006.