

OSHA Standards for loading dock safety

We're not lawyers and nothing here should be construed as legal opinion or advice. Things change quickly so be sure to check the facts to see what's current and what applies to your specific business, city, and state.

Falls are the most common causes of serious work related injuries and deaths. Employers must set up the work place to prevent employees from falling. If your workers won't keep your main door closed and locked, a Bug Blocker or Chain-Link door can help with fall protection as required by OSHA regulations.

[https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.29#1910.29\(d\)](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.29#1910.29(d))

[1910.21\(b\)](#)

Definitions:

Guardrail system means a barrier erected along an unprotected or exposed side, edge, or other area of a walking working surface to prevent employees from falling to a lower level.

Hoist area means any elevated access opening to a walking-working surface through which equipment or materials are loaded or received.

Toeboard means a low protective barrier that is designed to prevent materials, tools, and equipment from falling to a lower level, and protect employees from falling.

Unprotected sides and edges mean any side or edge of a walking-working surface (except at entrances and other points of access) where there is no wall, guardrail system, or stair rail system to protect an employee from falling to a lower level.

Walking-working surface means any horizontal or vertical surface on or through which an employee walks, works, or gains access to a work area or workplace location.

OSHA quick card "Fall Protection in General Industry" states:

To prevent employees from being injured from falls, employers must:

- Guard every floor hole into which a worker can accidentally walk by use of a railing and toeboard or a floor hole cover.
- Provide a guardrail and toeboard around every open-sided platform, floor or runway that is 4 feet or higher off the ground or next level.

[1926.502\(a\)\(2\)](#)

Employers shall provide and install all fall protection systems required by this subpart for an employee, and shall comply with all other pertinent requirements of this subpart before that employee begins the work that necessitates the fall protection.

[1910.28\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)](#)

The employer must ensure that each employee on a walking-working surface with an unprotected side or edge that is 4 feet (1.2 m) or more above a lower level is protected from falling by one of the following:

[1910.28\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)\(A\)](#)

Guardrail systems;

[1910.28\(b\)\(2\)](#)

Hoist areas. The employer must ensure:

[1910.28\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#)

Each employee in a hoist area is protected from falling 4 feet (1.2 m) or more to a lower level by:

[1910.28\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)\(A\)](#)

A guardrail system;

We can help you with our strong steel screen doors. Your factory can let the fresh air in and you'll add one more step in helping prevent falls off the loading dock. When your existing door goes up pull down the Rasco Bug Blocker or Chain Link Door*. These doors make a complete seal around the opening when down and locked in place. A visual and physical personnel barrier to help them not fall off the dock. Remember you get ventilation, pest control and inventory control too!**

[1910.29\(b\)](#)

Guardrail systems. The employer must ensure guardrail systems meet the following requirements:

[1926.502\(b\)\(1\)](#)

Top edge height of top rails, or equivalent guardrail system members, shall be 42 inches (1.1 m) plus or minus 3 inches (8 cm) above the walking/working level. When conditions warrant, the height of the top edge may exceed the 45-inch height, provided the guardrail system meets all other criteria of this paragraph.

[1926.502\(b\)\(2\)](#)

Midrails, screens, mesh, intermediate vertical members, or equivalent intermediate structural members shall be installed between the top edge of the guardrail system and the walking/working surface when there is no wall or parapet wall at least 21 inches (53 cm) high.

[1926.502\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#)

Midrails, when used, shall be installed at a height midway between the top edge of the guardrail system and the walking/working level.

[1926.502\(b\)\(2\)\(ii\)](#)

Screens and mesh, when used, shall extend from the top rail to the walking/working level and along the entire opening between top rail supports.

[1926.502\(b\)\(3\)](#)

Guardrail systems shall be capable of withstanding, without failure, a force of at least 200 pounds (890 N) applied within 2 inches (5.1 cm) of the top edge, in any outward or downward direction, at any point along the top edge.

[1926.502\(b\)\(4\)](#)

When the 200 pound (890 N) test load specified in paragraph (b)(3) of this section is applied in a downward direction, the top edge of the guardrail shall not deflect to a height less than 39 inches (1.0 m) above the walking/working level. Guardrail system

components selected and constructed in accordance with the Appendix B to subpart M of this part will be deemed to meet this requirement.

1926.502(b)(5)

Midrails, screens, mesh, intermediate vertical members, solid panels, and equivalent structural members shall be capable of withstanding, without failure, a force of at least 150 pounds (666 N) applied in any downward or outward direction at any point along the midrail or other member.

1910.29(b)(6)

Guardrail systems are smooth-surfaced to protect employees from injury, such as punctures or lacerations, and to prevent catching or snagging of clothing.

1910.29(b)(9)

Top rails and midrails are at least 0.25-inches (0.6 cm) in diameter or in thickness.

1910.29(b)(10)

When guardrail systems are used at hoist areas, a removable guardrail section, consisting of a top rail and midrail, are placed across the access opening between guardrail sections when employees are not performing hoisting operations. The employer may use chains or gates instead of a removable guardrail section at hoist areas if the employer demonstrates the chains or gates provide a level of safety equivalent to guardrails.

1910.28(c)(1)

Erecting toeboards, screens, or guardrail systems to prevent objects from falling to a lower level;

1910.28(c)(3)

Barricading the area into which objects could fall, prohibiting employees from entering the barricaded area, and keeping objects far enough from an edge or opening to prevent them from falling to a lower level.

*we highly recommend having an automatic motorized lowering of the Rasco screen door so it is always in place when the door is left open for ventilation. As a standard states:

1910.29(b)(13)(i)

Has a self-closing gate that slides or swings away from the hole, and is equipped with a top rail and midrail or equivalent intermediate member that meets the requirements in paragraph (b) of this section;

**We have done in-house testing on the Bug Blocker and Chain-Link doors, 3rd party certification and online videos are in the works.