Scaffolds may only be erected under the supervision of an individual who has been trained as a “competent person.” All employees that use scaffolding must also be trained in its use.

The following general rules apply to scaffold erection and use:

• Scaffolds must be erected on sound, rigid footing, capable of carrying the maximum intended load without settling or displacement. Base plates or mud sills must always be used.

• Scaffolds and their components must be capable of supporting, without failure, at least 4 times the maximum intended load.

• All planking must be scaffold-grade or equivalent, as recognized by approved grading rules for the species of wood used.

• Scaffold planking must be overlapped a minimum of 12 inches or secured from movement.

• Scaffold planks must extend over their end supports not less than 6 inches or more than 12 inches.

• An access ladder or equivalent safe access must be provided.

• Guardrails, mid-rails, and toe boards must be installed on all open sides and ends of platforms more than 10 feet above the ground or floor.

• Guardrails must be installed approximately 42 inches above the working platform and must be able to resist a force of 200 pounds applied in any direction.

• Toe boards must be a minimum of 3.5 inches high.

• Supported scaffold above 4 times its minimum base dimension must be restrained by guy wires, ties, braces, or outriggers to prevent accidental displacement.
Additional Information for Presenters
Review the information provided on the reverse side of this safety tip sheet. Please refrain from reading the information verbatim—paraphrase it instead.

Talking Points:
Approximately 50 workers die from scaffold-related accidents annually, and about 4,500 workers are injured while using scaffold equipment. According to the National Safety Council Injury Facts 2004, fall-type accidents are the second-highest average cost of worker injury, at $18,838. Falls are also the second-leading cause of worker death, behind motor vehicle crashes.

OSHA Standards That May Apply:
1910 General Duty Clause (general industry)
1926.450-454 Subpart L: Scaffolds (construction industry)

Links:
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
www.osha.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Protection, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
www.cdc.gov/niosh

Construction Safety Council
www.buildsafe.org

Minnesota LTAP
Center for Transportation Studies
University of Minnesota
200 Transportation and Safety Building
511 Washington Avenue S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: 612-626-1077
Fax: 612-625-6381
E-mail: mnltap@umn.edu
Web: www.mnltap.umn.edu

Minnesota LTAP Program Sponsors:
• Minnesota Local Road Research Board
• Minnesota Department of Transportation
• Federal Highway Administration

August 2005

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Printed on recycled paper with 30 percent postconsumer waste.