

First Deadlines of New General Industry Walking-Working Surfaces and Fall Protection Standard

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The final rule for General Industry Walking-Working Surfaces and Fall Protection (“Walking-Working Surfaces Rule”) was published in November 2016, but some of the deadlines for compliance are in May 2017. The Walking-Working Surfaces Rule covers any horizontal, vertical or inclined working surface, adding new requirements for ladder safety and inspecting walking-working surfaces among other new requirements.

On some issues, the Walking-Working Surfaces Rule brings the regulations to the same level as the construction standards and adopts new requirements based on the current ANSI standards. The Walking-Working Surfaces Rule gives the employer more flexibility in determining which fall protection methods are best suited for the worksite’s potential exposure. To assist employers with effectuating a proper fall protection plan, the Walking-Working Surfaces Rule includes two non-mandatory appendices (C&D) addressing: (1) planning for, selecting, using and inspecting personal fall arrest systems (Appendix C); and (2) test methods and procedures for personal fall arrest work positioning systems (Appendix D).

The Walking-Working Surfaces Rule includes requirements for training. By May 17, 2017, employers must have met the following two training requirements:

- Ensuring exposed workers are trained on fall hazards.
- Ensuring workers who use equipment covered by the final rule are trained.

Other aspects of the Walking-Working Surfaces Rule are effective in November 2017. More information on the Walking-Working Surfaces Rule and its requirements can be found [here](#).