

Floor Openings and Stairways Policy

The purpose of the Floor Opening and Stairways Policy is to protect employees from hazards associated with floor openings and open stairway sides, and to ensure compliance with New Hampshire Department of Labor Standard 1403.22, Floor Openings and Open Sides.

A. Employers Responsibilities

The employer shall ensure that all floor openings and open railing sides are adequately guarded according to the specifications listed in section 3 of this policy.

B. Employee Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that cover plates, removable rails, and hinged floor openings are appropriately placed both during and after work in the opening.

C. Procedural Overview

Standard railings must be installed on all open sides except at the entrance. Entrance to ladder way openings must have a guard to prevent a person from walking directly into the opening.

Hatchways and chutes must be guarded by a hinged floor opening cover, and be equipped with standard railings leaving only one exposed side or a removable railing with toe board on no more than two sides and a fixed standard railing with toe boards on all other exposed sides.

Other floor openings into which persons can accidentally walk must be guarded by a standard railing with standard toe board on all exposed sides; or a floor opening cover capable of supporting at least twice the weight of the employees, equipment, and materials that might be imposed on these covers at any one time. Covers must be secure to prevent accidental displacement, and marked with the word "hole" or "cover" to provide warning of the hazard.

From the Town of Amherst's Policy and Procedure Manual, 2009.