

Elevator Industry Field Employees' Safety Handbook

The importance of this industry standard in field-safety publications is discussed.

by Ray Downs

Take a look at the elevator industry today, and you will see a changing industry. Highly technologically advanced and existing equipment present many new challenges. These changes have also changed the way we perform our daily tasks and put a heightened emphasis on safety. Unfortunately, we experience work-related injuries that could result in a few sutures, broken bones, a bad back or a knee replacement way too often. These injuries can end careers or, worse, a fatal injury can impact the families of those who lost a loved one.

We all take chances, and I am sure many of us have purchased a lottery ticket that could change our lives. The chance of winning is very slim to none, but your chances of being injured in the elevator industry and the risks associated with our industry today are far greater than winning the lottery.

The *Elevator Industry Field Employees' Safety Handbook* details the processes your company and employees must understand and execute to safely maintain, service, repair, install and modernize vertical-transportation units on a daily basis. It covers general safety, tells you what your responsibility is, and advises how to conduct a site safety inspection to test and verify that your field employees understand and are executing safe work practices. It also covers the necessary personal protective equipment needed to do the job safely, and when and where to use fall protection. It also addresses electrical-

safety work practices to include lockout/tagout (LOTO) and *NFPA 70-E Arc Flash Standard* requirements.

All of the above is critical to any company's success in a changing and competitive industry. Now, if you are struggling in establishing a safety program, and you think you are doing all that is

necessary to keep your field teams safe, I ask, do you have a copy of the handbook? The U.S. Department of Labor and OSHA reference this handbook as the industry standard. If you have not purchased the handbook (available at www.elevatorbooks.com), this is the next best thing to supplementing and providing guidance to assist you and your company in running a

safe, efficient and compliant safety program.

Ten simple questions to ask yourself in determining your understanding and knowledge of elevator safety are:

- 1) Whom does a personal lock protect?
- 2) Whom does a group lock protect?
- 3) Which type of clothing and gloves are to be worn to be in compliance with *NFPA 70-E Arc Flash Standard* requirements?
- 4) Is fall protection required only in construction?
- 5) Is an outrigger considered fall protection on top of the car in maintenance?
- 6) Should I test and verify the door lock and all top-of-car stop and inspection switches independently prior to getting on top of the car?

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- 7) Is there a need to test and verify safeties daily on the false car or running and working platforms?
- 8) Do toolbox safety talks replace a safety training program?
- 9) Do some machine-room-less elevators with controllers in the hoistway have multiple lockout locations?
- 10) In addition to LOTO, whenever working within the truss where 10% or more of the escalator steps are removed, should a mechanical blocking device be activated to prevent the escalator from moving?

If you have struggled to answer any of the above correctly, the handbook will assist your company's training efforts to ensure understanding and execution to hopefully save someone from suffering a serious or fatal accident. This resource offers volumes of elevator-industry safe-work practices and materials that I have used in my quarterly safety training classes and will continue to use as a reference in providing guidance so all our employees go home safely every night to their families. Remember, your family depends on you.



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