

Safety Examination Guidelines

General Safety Guidelines

Warehouse inspectors must follow applicable safety guidelines to the best of his/her ability. Upon arriving at the warehouse the warehouse inspector shall.

1. Announce your arrival at the facility before starting any phase of the examination.
2. Verify warehouse personnel are aware of your presence. Request the warehouseman delay operations in your immediate working area.
3. Be subject to the requirements of any safety program in effect at a North Dakota warehouse while on the premises. If the warehouseman does not have a safety program, encourage the warehouseman to consider establishing one.
4. Be familiar with the emergency evacuation plan, signals, and routes. Know how to evacuate quickly in the event of an emergency.
5. Inquire about hazardous chemicals and conditions that may be encountered. Warning signs may be empty chemical containers, taped hatches, and/or chemical odors.
6. Not walk on the grain surface if you suspect the grain may be bridged.
7. Be extremely cautious of acute grain slopes, or where wading or spontaneous action may create a hazard from sliding grain.
8. Be aware of deteriorating grain and mold which can emit dangerous gases and cause an oxygen deficient atmosphere.
9. Conduct yourself in a professional and responsible manner, remaining alert to the conditions that may endanger you or others.
10. Know the whereabouts of each other at all times when working with a fellow inspector or another individual. A warehouse employee must accompany the inspector while measuring grain, unless the licensee provides the inspector with a radio or other communication device.
11. Dress appropriately – do not wear loose clothing around running machinery and belts. Jewelry can contribute to injury under certain conditions. As a general rule, dangling items should not be worn when working outside the office. Be aware of wrist watches and rings when climbing stairs or ladders. Long hair should be confined to prevent exposure to machinery and equipment.
12. Use both hands on a ladder – equipment should be stowed on your person or hauled up and down by rope.
13. Be familiar with symptoms and preventative measures of heat exhaustion.
14. Always use handrails when climbing stairs. Be alert for moisture, grain, and dust accumulation, stay alert for overhead obstructions, and always ascend or descend one step at a time.
15. Watch for worn or defective equipment, limit switches being tied open, inoperative emergency brake release, inoperative doors (tied open), and loose counter-weights, when using man lifts.
16. Verify catwalks are guarded with handrails, their flooring is grated or of a non-slip material, walk single file and well spaced to distribute the weight load, be alert for

- overhead obstructions, when getting on or off be sure of your handhold and footing, and always walk, when using catwalks.
17. Be provided with a safe access to the roof top examination points. Outside flat roof storage bins must be equipped with perimeter roof railing, hand rails to each examination point, and other acceptable safety aids as dictated by prevailing conditions.
 18. Stay clear of vehicles in the process of loading or unloading which may start, stop, or change direction without notice.
 19. Never go under or between parked rail cars.
 20. Never attempt to hitch a ride on a moving rail car.
 21. Be alert to all vehicle movement. Do not rely on the operator to assure your safety.

Safety Hazards

All warehouses contain safety hazards which may not be possible to eliminate. Once hazards are identified, they can be avoided or dealt with safely. Safety conditions should be reviewed and addressed at each facility. When safety hazards are identified, the warehouse inspector should.

1. Request the warehouseman correct the condition causing the hazard.
2. Use personal protective equipment to negate the hazard.
3. Refuse to enter the area if you perceive a condition that could reasonably be considered a threat to your safety.

Be aware that grain dust is highly explosive when the following elements are present.

1. Oxygen.
2. Grain dust.
3. Confined space.
4. Source of ignition.
5. Dust in suspension.
6. Low moisture dust.
7. A minimum concentration of dust.

Although oxygen, grain dust, and confined space are always present, a source of ignition such as a faulty electrical connection, static electricity, a hot bearing, a spark from tramp metal in the grain stream, smoking, welding, or any similar operation producing a spark or open flame, is needed for an explosion to occur. The presence of dust in suspension, dust that is low in moisture, and a minimum concentration of dust should increase awareness to potential danger. Although warehouse inspectors have little opportunity to control the elements contributing to a dust explosion, be familiar with these

elements in an effort to avoid this type of hazard. If you believe conditions exist that are conducive to an explosion, you should discuss your concerns with the warehouse management and your supervisor.

Warehouse inspectors must wear personal protection equipment, as appropriate, including:

1. Head protection - must meet the American National Standards Institute and should be worn to prevent bumping the head on an object or being struck by a falling object. Damaged hats should be replaced immediately upon request.
2. Hearing protection - as required by the Occupational Safety & Health Act (OSHA) must be worn when warehouse examiners are exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels.
3. Foot protection – steel toed shoes must should be worn when foot safety is a concern. Always wear shoes with non-slip soles that provide protection for prevailing conditions.
4. Eye protection – if you believe you will be exposed to chemical hazards or other conditions requiring auxiliary eye protection, request safety non-prescription glasses or goggles.
5. Fall protection – the licensee should provide you with safety harnesses as necessary.

Bin Warehouse Access

An inspector's greatest exposure to safety hazards will occur while measuring grain inventory. When accessing bins and warehouses, only safe devices should be used. The most common devices are fixed ladders, stairways, man lifts, catwalks, and roof ladders. Use only equipment meeting OSHA standards. If the only access available to a storage facility is unsafe, DO NOT access the container.

Use caution when accessing flat storage buildings especially if equipment is in operation. To safely inventory a flat building warehouse inspectors must.

1. Notify the equipment operator that you will be working in the building.
2. Always be aware of where machines are working and how long it will affect your safety.
3. Be aware of possible carbon monoxide levels from the exhaust emissions.
4. Notify the operator when you leave the building.
5. Do not use the bucket for being lifted or transported.

The bin floor is generally the primary access point when inventorying conventional wood or concrete elevators. While in the bin do not:

1. Step on a manhole cover or grate.
2. Step on, walk on, or step across a conveyor belt, even if it is idle.

3. Step upon the cover of an auger or drag conveyor – unless it is constructed to also be used as a catwalk in which case it must be fitted with special cover and handrails. If you are unsure, ask warehouse personnel.
4. Step across an uncovered auger or drag conveyor while it is in operation.

Always be alert for overhead obstructions and use caution when working around spilled grain. Also be alert for oil, water, or grease spills, portable power cords, rope, dust covers for grated openings, etc. Dust and spilled grain may hide a hazard which, otherwise, could be easily avoided. Such conditions also add to the risk of fire and/or dust explosion, and should be pointed out to management in your departure report. Also watch for uncovered manholes and unguarded openings. You have a right to safe access to all storage bins and it is important that you report any recognized unsafe conditions to the warehouse management.

Ladder Use

When using ladders, warehouse inspectors must.

1. Be aware of all overhead obstructions and be especially alert for overhead electrical service lines.
2. Place ladders only on solid and level footing. If using an extension ladder, be sure the extensions are in good working order.
3. Have someone hold the ladder to prevent slipping, if it rests against a rounded or uneven surface.
4. Be aware of overhead power lines and avoid contact.
5. Use the proper sized ladder. It should extend at least three feet above the dismount or working level.
6. Keep the feet of a straight portable ladder out from the bin wall one foot for each four feet of vertical distance being climbed.
7. Use only fixed ladders when access is more than 20 feet above the ground level.
8. Use cages, belts, or safety devices for primary access ladders more than 20 feet long. The rungs should be evenly spaced and not more than 12 inches apart.
9. Check for loose or missing rungs before using wood or aluminum ladders.
10. Check portable hook ladders (hanging) for rust or damage before using. Verify the “hooks” are still rounded and free of kinks, the top is hung over a solid object, and it does not exceed its working limit.
11. Check fixed ladders on bin exteriors to insure they are securely fastened to the bin. Stay alert for obstructions, such as spouts, landings, and electrical service wires.
12. Always use both hands when ascending or descending.
13. Always use extreme caution on slick, wet, or ice coated ladders and avoid whenever possible.
14. Never climb onto a ladder until a previous climber is off and clear of the ladder.

15. Do not use a fork-lift to reach the bottom rung of a bin ladder or reach the inspection door at the roof eve.
16. If the distance between the ground and the step-off point is greater than 30 feet, the ladder should be caged or partially enclosed, or equipped with another kind of approved safety device.

Driving Safety

Travel is part of the job of being a warehouse inspector and must practice safe driving at all times. Warehouse inspectors must.

1. Always wear seat belts.
2. Have a valid driver's license.
3. Observe all traffic ordinances.
4. Be aware of hazardous driving conditions.
5. Always drive defensively.

The purpose of this Safety Examination Guide is to help the inspectors be aware of the potential hazards in their work place. This guide will assist the inspectors in protecting themselves and others from work place hazards, and reduce or prevent accidents. This guide does not in any way relieve the inspectors from complying with all Commission policies.