



## OSHA Caged Ladder Update

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) final rule revising and updating its general industry walking-working surfaces standards and personal fall protection systems became official. This rule affects employees in all general industry workplaces, such as warehousing, utilities, retail, manufacturing among others.

After being in the making for over 20 years, the final rule was published in the Federal Register on November 18, 2016, and became effective in 60 days which was January 17, 2017. OSHA has provided delayed compliance dates for several requirements. Whilst this standard covers a wide variety of topics, in this article we are focusing on fall protection cages that are common on fixed ladders.

As fixed ladders become increasingly used to provide safe access to elevations, this new standard will have a major impact. The key points relating to fall protection cages are stated in OSHA 1910.28 (b)(9).

Each fixed ladder that extends more than 24' above a lower level that is installed before November 19, 2018, should be equipped with a personal fall arrest system, cage or well. The height at which a form of fall protection was required was previously 20'. This has now been increased to 24'.

All fixed ladders (that extend more than 24 feet) installed on and after November 19, 2018, are equipped with a personal fall arrest system or a ladder safety system. Please note that cages sold or installed after November 19, 2018, are no longer considered a form of fall protection. Cages installed prior to this date are still accepted as a form of protection (until the final deadline comes into effect). We feel that it is important to note that whilst cages are still allowed to be sold until November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, we as a company will be pro-actively informing people of these changes immediately.

When a fixed ladder, cage, or well, or any portion of a section thereof, is replaced (on and after November 18, 2018), a personal fall arrest system or ladder safety system is installed in at least that section of the fixed ladder, cage, or well where the replacement is located.

On and after November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2036, all fixed ladders (that extend more than 24 feet) should be equipped with a personal fall arrest system or a ladder safety system. Although this is 20 years away, from prior experience the market typically adopts these changes quickly. November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2036, is the final deadline that no cages are allowed as a form of fall protection.