

Steel erection in construction: requirements for competent persons

Division 3, Subdivision R



Who can be a competent person for steel erection?

A competent person for steel erection is someone designated by the employer who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions that are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has the authority to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them. Competent person responsibilities can be shared by more than one person at the site as long as each person understands their respective roles and Oregon OSHA's steel erection rules.

For steel erection in Oregon, a competent person is considered someone with the equivalent skills as a “qualified person” in identifying existing hazards in the workplace. This means that a competent person does not need to have a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, but must have the knowledge and experience necessary to have successfully *demonstrated* their ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter, the work, or the project.

The following Division 3, Subdivision R, rules apply to competent persons for steel erection:

Site-specific erection plan

437-003-0752(2)(b) Employees are allowed on suspended loads only when a competent person has determined that it is the safest way to accomplish a specific task or there is no other way to do the work.

Hoisting and rigging

1926.753(c)(1)(i), (ii), and (iii) Cranes used in steel erection activities must be visually inspected for deficiencies by a competent person before each shift. If any deficiency is identified, the competent person must determine immediately if the deficiency is a hazard. The equipment must be removed from service if the competent person determines that a hazard exists.

Division 3/CC, Cranes and Derricks in Construction also has pre-shift inspection requirements for cranes. On multi-employer construction sites where the crane or hoisting equipment is not owned or controlled by the steel erector, the steel erector may rely on the pre-shift inspection by the crane owner's operator or designated competent person. However, the steel erector still has the responsibility to verify that the pre-shift inspection was done before work begins on each shift.



Structural steel assembly

1926.754(d)(1) and (3) When deemed necessary by a competent person, plumbing-up equipment must be installed in conjunction with the steel erection process to ensure the stability of the structure. The equipment must be removed only with the approval of a competent person.



Column anchorage

1926.755(a)(4) All columns must be evaluated by a competent person to determine whether guying or bracing is needed; guying or bracing must be installed if it is needed.

Beams and columns

1926.756(a)(1) and (2) During the final placing of solid web structural members, the load must not be released from the hoisting line until the members are secured with at least two bolts per connection; the bolts must be the same size and strength as shown in the erection drawings. A competent person must determine if more than two bolts are necessary to ensure the stability of cantilevered members; additional bolts must be installed if they are needed.

Guidelines for establishing a site-specific erection plan

Appendix A, (c)(8) In developing a site-specific erection plan, a steel erector must identify the qualified and competent persons who will be involved in the project.

Fall protection systems criteria and practices

Appendix G, (c)(4) Safety nets used for fall protection must be drop tested after they are installed unless a competent person certifies in writing that the net meets Division 3, Subdivision M (Fall protection) safety net requirements.

Appendix G, (d)(19) Personal fall arrest systems and components subjected to an impact must be immediately removed from service and not be used until a competent person inspects them and determines they are undamaged and can be used again.

The following Division 3, Subdivision C, rule applies to all employers in Construction:

Accident prevention responsibilities

1926.20(b) Competent persons designated by the employer must conduct frequent and regular inspections of job sites, materials, and equipment.

The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to supplement the rules and provide best practices to employers.