

March 19, 2001

Kimberly Gamble
Andersen Construction
6712 North Cutter Circle
Portland, OR 97217

Dear Ms. Gamble:

This is in response to your letter of February 26, 2001 asking questions about planking requirements for scaffolds.

The answer to your first question is, "Yes." If you can't fit in a final board to completely close the gap then the remaining gap is legal as long as it is 9 ½ inches or less. There is no violation for gaps of 9 ½ inches or less. Remember that the planking can have no other gaps, it must be tight.

The answer to your second question is that OR-OSHA has no definition of "commercially available plank." Since the new standard does not require a specific type of planking, we have no need for a definition.

Your final question asks about staggered methods of planking. Oregon OSHA believes that when some platforms will accept full planking and others won't it is best to plank uniformly. Therefore, if you have six stages erected and two will take full planking but four will not, we recommend leaving all stages planked with a gap of 9 ½ inches or less. We believe that uniformity is less hazardous than having some areas with a gap and some without.

For further information contact Ron Preece at 1-503-378-3272. You're invited to see the OR-OSHA pages on the Internet at www.orosha.org.

Sincerely,

Marilyn K. Schuster, Manager
Standards & Technical Resources Section
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division