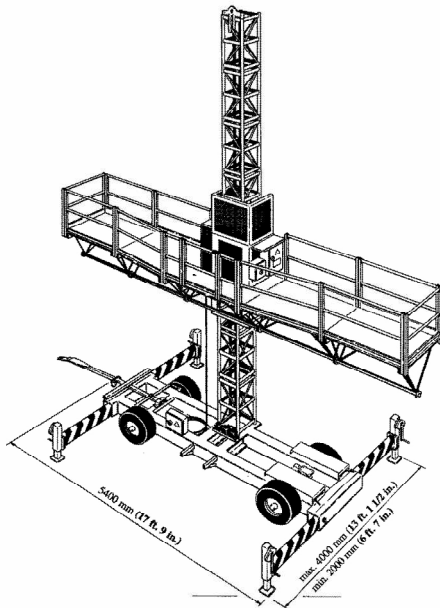




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30 Arrested in NYC Scaffold Certification Fraud

Discovery of a fraudulent scaffold certification ring resulted in 30 arrests by top New York City (NYC) officials. In addition, according to the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), a construction company owner has been charged with possessing 32 fake scaffold certification cards he had made. These cards are required for anyone to work on scaffolding in NYC.



OSHA reports that Rose Gill Hearn, commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, and Buildings DOB Commissioner Robert LiMandri conducted a two-week sweep where more than 70 cards were confiscated by police.

According to OSHA, one person arrested was charged with possessing 32 fake scaffold certification cards that he made by altering real safety cards. Since the sweep, partial and full stop work orders have been issued at 14 construction sites for a variety of violations including unapproved installation of supported scaffolding.

“In this day and age, there is no excuse for having untrained scaffold erectors on the job,” said Marty Coughlin, president of the Scaffold & Access Industry Association (SAIA) and president of Dependable

Scaffolding, LLC . “Training is provided at low cost and sometimes is free from scaffold suppliers, trade unions, trade associations, union apprentice programs, SAIA accredited training institutes and more.”

The department launched the operation after DOB reported in September that its inspectors had found fraudulent scaffold certification cards at work sites across Manhattan. The sweep began with DOI investigators and DOB inspectors visiting 16 work sites in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens beginning in mid-October

“This was clearly a willful act that not only put the employees at risk, but everyone on the jobsite who will be working on the scaffolding and relying on the scaffolding to be erected safely and within code,” Coughlin said.