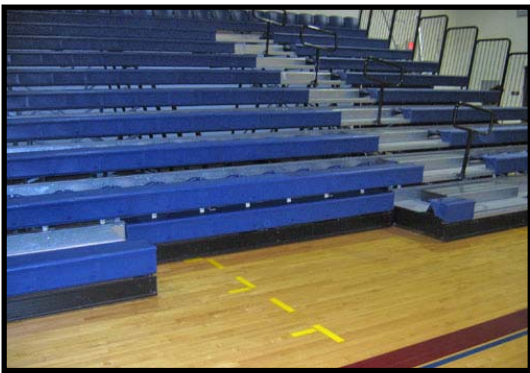




Bleacher Safety



Dangers associated with bleachers are often underestimated or altogether unnoticed. However, given the amount of injuries and, in some cases, deaths caused by bleacher accidents, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that organizations pay serious attention to the overall safety and structural integrity of their bleachers.

It has been estimated that nearly 20,000 people a year suffer from bleacher injuries. From 1999 to 2003, bleacher accidents caused almost 20 deaths. What follows are best practice guidelines that are intended to help increase the safety of your bleachers.

Routinely inspect the bleacher construction to ensure that:

- There are no loose bolts, pins, or nuts.
- The ends of all bolts are capped appropriately.
- There are no areas that can cause pinching or crushing.
- All moving components are properly lubricated and free of rust.
- Any damaged bleacher components are immediately repaired or replaced.
- Every two years, a third-party certified bleacher design professional should conduct a thorough inspection of the bleachers.
- Place clearly visible signage on the bleachers where appropriate. This would include signage such as: “Do Not Climb,” “Use Rails,” etc.
- Only authorized personnel should have access to the area underneath the bleachers. For pull-out bleachers, only authorized personnel should be permitted to operate them.
- Bleachers should be securely anchored to the ground and/or tied to the walls to prevent shaking or bending under the weight of large crowds.
- Every step and change of elevation on the bleachers should be clearly marked and visible.
- The elevation change between each step and seat should be uniform throughout the bleachers.
- Bleachers higher than 30 inches from ground level should have rear guardrails installed that are at least 42 inches high.
- Handrails should be provided on the sides of bleachers that are elevated more than 50 inches from ground level.
- Openings between the ballusters of handrails, between seats, and between the ballusters of rear guardrails, should not exceed four inches. In general, any openings in bleacher railing should not exceed four inches.
- Children under the age of 12 should not be left unattended at any time on the bleachers.
- Bleachers should be cleared of debris and trash and appropriately sanitized after each use.

This Alliant Risk Control Consulting fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.

For more information on this topic, please contact Alliant Risk Control Consulting at (949) 260-5042 or riskcontrol@alliant.com