

SDHS Green Industries General Knowledge



Safety Measures for Using a Wheelbarrow: Inspection and Handling Tips

Whether it is hauling bricks, sand, gravel, tiles or concrete, wheelbarrows are very helpful in carrying a small amount of heavy objects and materials and moving them from one place to another. Workers must be trained not only in the proper way to use wheelbarrows, but also in wearing the right kind of personal protective equipment (PPE) while using this indispensable tool.

Wheelbarrow Inspection

Safety in the use of wheelbarrows starts with conducting proper inspection before using them. Workers must take their time to examine every part of the wheelbarrow to make sure that it is in perfect condition. Here are the parts of a wheelbarrow and questions that serve as guidelines in making sure that they are not damaged or defected in any way.

1. Handles/grips

Do the handles have cracks?

Are the grips in good condition?

2. Nuts, washer and bolts

Are all the nuts, washers, and bolts in place and tightened?

3. Frames

Are the frames cracked or bent?

4. Bracing

Is the bracing in place and in good condition?

5. Bucket/tipping

Do the buckets or tipping bodies have holes, cracks or bends in them?

Do they have dried concrete or debris left in them?

6. Stands/legs

Are any of the stands or legs missing?

Are the stands and legs cracked, broken or bent?

7. Wheels

Are all the wheels clean and straight?

8. Axle shafts

Are all the axle shafts straight and tight?

9. Wheel bearings

Are the wheel bearings tight, clean and lubricated?

10. Tires/tubes

Are the tires low on air?

Are they worn out or weather-cracked?

11. Valve stems

Do the valve stems have a cap in place?

Are they weather-cracked?

12. Paint/coating

Are the paint and other coatings chipping?

Do they have rust?

General Wheelbarrow Safety Guidelines

Here are guidelines to follow to ensure safety while using a wheelbarrow in the worksite:

- Take out a defected wheelbarrow from service to have it repaired or replaced.
- Make sure that the wheelbarrow has the proper capacity rating for the objects or materials that have to be hauled. Never overload it.
- All areas where a wheelbarrow will be loaded must be free of any debris.
- Before hauling objects/materials with a wheelbarrow, inspect the pathway where it will be moved to ensure that it is free of unnecessary equipment, objects, materials and employees.
- Check the path where you will move the wheelbarrow to ensure that the surface is free of obstructions, pot-holes and grading problems.
- Employees must wear proper and complete PPE when hauling loads with a wheelbarrow. The proper PPE usually includes a hard hat, cover-all clothing, heavy-duty gloves, safety goggles/safety glasses, and safety boots or shoes.
- All ramps must be clean and strong enough to withstand the weight of anticipated loads that will be moved over them.
- Each ramp must have adequate blocking under them that can eliminate any deflections that may happen when wheelbarrows are moved over the ramp.
- All ramps must be wide enough that employees will have sure footing while hauling loads with wheelbarrows over them.
- All doorways must be wide enough that employees have free movement through them while handling a loaded wheelbarrow.
- Toe boards and railings must be installed on sections of ramps that are six feet or more high. The same thing should be done with ramps with trenches below them that are at least six feet deep.

Remember that safe usage of the wheelbarrow starts with conducting proper inspection of each part of this tool. But it's never complete without proper training in handling it and without donning complete PPE while hauling loads with it.

