



This safety resource was written for the recycled materials industry by the recycled materials industry and was developed to assist you in making your recycling operation a safe place for employees, customers, and visitors. This resource covers OSHA requirements that may or may not be applicable to your operation.

RAILROAD CARS

DEFINITION: Open-top 'gondola' rail cars commonly used to ship loose metal scrap, baled metal scrap, plate, shredder fluff, and baled paper scrap. Box cars used for loading baled scrap. Yard locomotives often used to maneuver cars on siding within yard.

Potential Hazards:

- Falling from heights
- Falling while climbing
- Falling materials during loading/unloading
- Runover and Runaway
- Fouling' close-parked equipment, materials and people
- Equipment damage
- Pinch points/crush points
- Diesel exhaust fumes
- Locomotive engine compartments and exhaust systems require guarding/shielding to prevent accidental contact by workers.
- Electrical shock hazards

Guarding/Shielding:

- End of line bumpers are required on sidings in yard. Railcar chocks necessary whenever parked and stationary for loading/unloading.
- Dockplates/bridge plates required when loading box cars with powered industrial trucks.
- Locomotives require guards on rotating parts, hydraulic lines, and hot surfaces.

Protective Equipment:

Hard hats*

Safety glasses*

Steel toe/steel shank work boots*

Gloves as needed Respirator as needed

**minimum requirements*

Safety Procedures:

- Written railcar management procedures required for all operations.
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- Inspection requirements for all railcars using inspection checklist per Federal Railroad Administration and company policy.
- Formal training of all operators required including inspection requirements and recordkeeping, hand signaling requirements, switching operations, warning signs and electronic signals, coupling lever operation, brake setting, brake inspection, chocking procedures and fouling avoidance.
- All operators require training on proper mounting and dismounting techniques.
- All operators require training on track crossing procedures:
 - Never within 25-feet of stopped, separated cars;
 - Never within 10-feet of stopped end car.
- Lockout/Tagout procedures and systems must be used when performing maintenance operations on locomotives, railcars, axles, wheels or other assemblies.
- Radio and hand signal communications required when moving, switching, loading, unloading and otherwise managing railcars and locomotives within the yard.
- Keep rail siding clear of debris/scrap to avoid slip/trip/fall hazards to workers.
- Load loose scrap material no more than level with the open-top gondola sides and end, per November 2008 AAR Technical Guidance.
- Baled scrap can be loaded above railcar sides and ends provided bale dimension is at least 50% below the sides/ends and completely covers any loose scrap.
- Lightweight scrap (i.e. tin and aluminum) must be covered with lids, tarps, mesh netting or other method to avoid materials from flying out of open-top railcar during transit, switching, humping or other movements.
- Authorized personnel only may approach railcar loading/unloading operations.
- Crane operators must stop movement when personnel are not in designated safety zones.