



Department of
Design and
Construction

SAFETY AND
SITE SUPPORT

Our Auditors Help Ensure Safety





Auditors communicate safety concerns to contractors.



Workers make immediate adjustments during safety audits.



Safety auditors visually inspected the entire work site.

The NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) builds New York City, constructing civic facilities as well as designing and improving vital infrastructure. Across hundreds of active construction sites in all five boroughs, DDC is committed to safety for construction workers and the general public. DDC safety auditors, under the direction of the leadership of DDC's **Safety and Site Support Division**, review construction work sites to ensure they are safe for everyone.

Putting Safety First

Auditors check to ensure that workers performing dangerous work are equipped with the proper protection and safeguards. They ensure that construction is happening without endangering the public. They prevent injury and manage risks by checking for everything else safety-related from tripping hazards to worn-out safety equipment to the lack of proper credentials.

On a recent safety audit in Bayside, Queens, DDC checked for critical and life-threatening situations, as well as minor threats. "We have our eyes and ears open for any problems," a safety auditor explained.

To install the pipes that bring water to homes around the city, construction workers need to go underground. Working below the surface is dangerous, especially because of the risk of cave-ins. If the walls of an excavation collapse, soil can crush and kill a worker quickly. To protect those installing pipes, protective systems are used to prevent cave-ins.

In Bayside, safety auditors inspected a metal protective system to ensure it would properly protect workers. Many standards are in place to protect workers during excavations to ensure that workers and the public are safe when work below the surface is happening. Inspections may also check for adequate warning systems when construction vehicles are working near trenches, that ladders out of the work area are no more than 25 feet apart, and that water is not accumulating during the excavation.



Auditors check safety measures for construction workers in confined spaces.

Protecting Workers

Excavations and trenches are dangerous but many other conditions may also pose various risks. If demolition is required, a safety auditor would check to ensure that pedestrians are protected, that proper methods for removing material are in place, that sprinkler systems are maintained, and more. When a building is being constructed, safety requirements are in place to prevent falls and fires, to govern the use of construction equipment and vehicles, and to minimize dust and noise. Proper protective equipment must be used during a job. Someone working over or near water must be wearing a fastened life jacket. A welder needs gloves, helmet, and protective goggles. In high-risk situations, safety auditors demand that the situation is resolved immediately. Work may be stopped if the issue cannot be fixed right away.

Protecting the Public

Auditors also check the sidewalks surrounding a work site to ensure they are open and clear. A lane for emergency vehicles must also be provided and fire hydrants must stay accessible. In Bayside, auditors reviewed the plan for traffic safety, made sure the worker flagging traffic was wearing the appropriate protective gear and properly trained, and checked that fire hydrants were visible to emergency workers.

Safety on DDC projects is ensured through proper planning, close inspections, regular audits, and a process that corrects any problems. Each year, DDC reviews hundreds of safety programs and performs over 1,000 site safety inspections and audits.