

Bleacher Safety

Thousands of people are injured from falls from bleachers every year. Falls can occur when guardrails are missing from the back and open sides of bleachers and when there is enough space between components for a person to fall through. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov) offers the following guidelines:

- Inspect bleachers for damage, wear, and misalignment before each use.
- At least quarterly, conduct routine inspection and maintenance in accordance with the owner's manual.
- Use only trained personnel—not students—to open and close bleachers according manufacturer's instructions.
- Install bleacher guardrails as a safety precaution and as an indication that the bleachers are fully extended.
- If the footboard, seatboard, or aisle of your bleachers is 30 inches or more above the ground, install guardrails on the backs and portions of the open ends of the bleachers.
- Make sure openings between guardrail seating components and under the guardrail are no more than 4 inches wide.
- When retrofitting bleachers, incorporate aisles, handrails, and non-skid surfaces to help prevent falls.
- A licensed professional engineer, registered architect, or company qualified to provide bleacher products and services should inspect the bleachers at least every two years and provide written certification that the bleachers are fit for use. Keep records of these inspections on file.

If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.