



# Safety Access Case Study

## Pierce College

### Lakewood, Washington

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# Situation

Pierce College, located in Lakewood, Washington, needed customized, WISHA-compliant aluminum access walkways, platforms, railing, stairs, and customized fall protection guard rails for compliant and safe pathways on the roofs of two buildings.

Pierce College Fort Steilacoom and many Pierce College District offices are on 146 acres 10 miles south of Tacoma. The campuses serve 20,230 students and 1,131 employees. The site houses multiple buildings, annexes, and industrial structures.

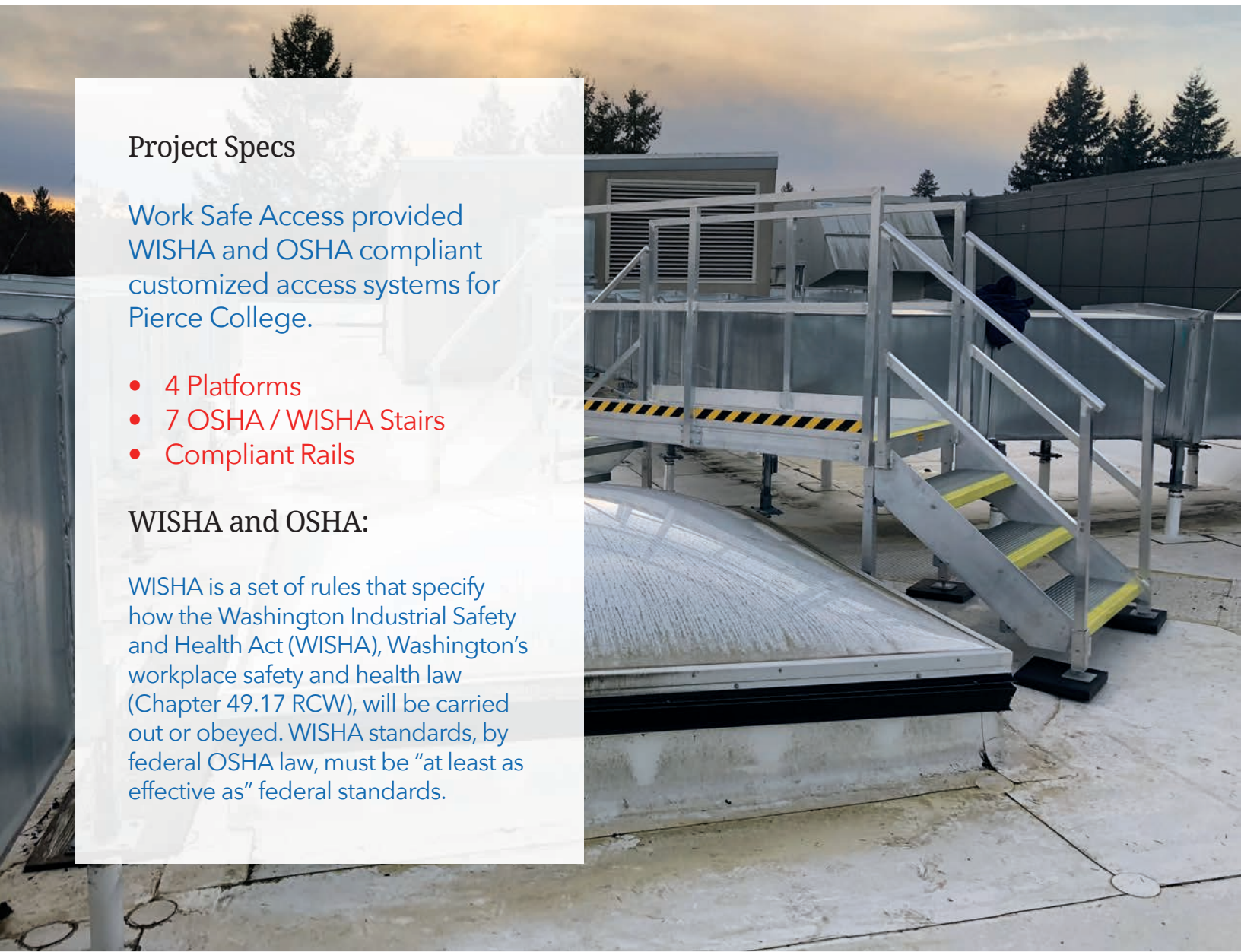
## Project Specs

Work Safe Access provided WISHA and OSHA compliant customized access systems for Pierce College.

- 4 Platforms
- 7 OSHA / WISHA Stairs
- Compliant Rails

## WISHA and OSHA:

WISHA is a set of rules that specify how the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA), Washington's workplace safety and health law (Chapter 49.17 RCW), will be carried out or obeyed. WISHA standards, by federal OSHA law, must be "at least as effective as" federal standards.





# Unique Challenges

## *Access Needs*

Pierce College needed to update rooftop pathways and create safe, WISHA compliant access over a skylight that would allow maintenance employees safe access to HVAC air handling units (AHUs). The units provide air, heat, and vent circulation throughout the buildings. They require regular scheduled maintenance, so safe access on the rooftop where they are situated is critical.

Located in the Pacific Northwest, the college required rugged, rust resistant aluminum access solutions that would not deteriorate like wood or steel materials. The access systems would need to stand up to slippery weather conditions and provide adequate space for walking and carrying tools or bulky items.

Tom Davis, Fort Steilacoom Buildings and Grounds Supervisor, contacted Work Safe Access (a division of Welcome Ramp Systems, Inc.) for a site survey of their rooftop access requirements.

### *Pierce College Cascade Building*

Maintenance personnel faced narrow access and an awkward path between the HVAC ducting and a rooftop skylight. The employees needed access to many areas of the roof, often carrying tools or other items that can make line of sight and

footing challenging.

The air handling unit location was situated near circulation ducts and a skylight. The AHUs require regular servicing and maintenance. The college needed an WISHA compliant customized pathway for maintenance access and servicing at any time of year.

Work Safe Access designed, manufactured, and installed pre-engineered, modular custom platforms with steps and guard rails to eliminate the tripping hazards while protecting the ducts. WISHA compliant guard rails were added to the design for fall protection risks associated with the skylight which was situated in the pathway. The “up and over” system addressed the walkability and safety issues concerning rooftop access for this building

### *Pierce College Olympic Building*

Other Pierce College access needs included WISHA-compliant platform and stair systems. The Olympic building has multiple flat roof sections that aren't a uniform height from section to section. The native architecture without safety access systems can present tripping hazards and awkward pathways to move from one section to another.



The prior access solution included a wooden structure that did not provide adequate access for maintenance personnel to walk certain areas of the rooftop. Work Safe Access replaced the wooden structure with their modular, pre-fabricated aluminum safety platform, steps, and guard rails.

## Results

### *Safe, Slip-Resistant Fall Protection and WISHA-Compliant Customized Access Solutions*

Work Safe Access provided a site survey and recommendations. Working with the Pierce College staff, Work Safe Access developed several customizations to create a WISHA compliant rooftop environment. All access systems were delivered and

installed within a few week from the date of the order.

Safe walkways on the rooftops is mission-critical for Pierce College. In any weather condition, staff must be able to safely service the AHU system with ease. Perforated, self-draining aluminum treads and platforms eliminate walkway pooling and provide a non-slip surface.

Work Safe Access solutions are designed to provide the safest environment possible.



***“Work Safe Access are professional, friendly, and knowledgeable. They offered creative customer solutions that are rugged, affordable, and efficient. We’re extremely satisfied!”***

– Tom Davis  
Supervisor,  
Building and Grounds  
Pierce College Fort Steilacoom



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