

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Ladder selection
- Inspection
- Safe Use
- Care and
- Maintenance
- Final Words

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Hats ON for Safety

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Raising Awareness About Ladder Safety

Whether it is in the workplace or at home, spring is here and the likelihood of being on a ladder increases. From cleaning gutters and debris to that touch-up paint job, chances are great you'll be on a ladder. Working on ladders is hazardous. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, falls from ladders account for nearly 24,000 injuries and over 100 deaths each year in private industry. However, you can help prevent injuries and fatalities at your

workplace by training your employees in how to properly select, inspect, use and maintain ladders.



Ladder Selection

When choosing a portable ladder consider:

- **Type** (step, straight or extension)
- **Length** (convenient height without reaching)
- **Strength** (determine the weight and stress the ladder has to bear.)
- **Material** (wood is nonconductive, heavy, and rots; metal is light, weather-resistant, but conducts electricity; and fiberglass is light, long-lasting, nonconductive and has good traction.)

| | |
|------------|---|
| Industrial | Heavy-duty with a load capacity of not more than 250 lbs. |
| Commercial | Medium-duty with a load capacity of not more than 225 lbs. (Suited for painting.) |
| Household | Light-duty with a load capacity of 200 lbs. |

Inspection

Inspect all ladders before using them. Look for loose, broken or missing parts, slippery rungs, skid-resistant features, movable parts, and ample oil on

metal bearings. Don't use damaged ladders. Tag them and have them repaired or destroyed.

Safe Use

A few precautions for safe

ladder use:

- Do not use metal ladders near electrical lines;
- Set the ladder on a firm, solid surface;

Training Requirements

According to OSHA manual *Stairways and Ladders 3124-12R 2003*, employers must train all employees to recognize hazards related to ladders and stairways, and instruct them to minimize these hazards. For example, employers must ensure that each employee is trained by a competent person in the following areas:

- Nature of fall hazards in the work area;
- Correct procedures for erecting, maintaining and disassembling the fall protection systems to be used,
- Proper construction, use, placement and care in handling of all stairways and ladders;
- Maximum intended load carrying capacities of ladders used.

Note: Employers must retrain each employee as necessary to maintain their understanding and knowledge on the safe use and construction of ladders and stairs.

Educating employees about proper lifting techniques, ladder usage and know-how to avoid falls will help prevent accidents. Preventing accidents will help improve productivity and make you more profitable.

- **Keep floors dry. When floors are wet put up caution signs.**
- **Apply non-skid wax properly**
- **Remove clutter in aisles and buildings**
- **Provide adequate lighting**
- **Get all employees trained**
- **Schedule maintenance properly.**

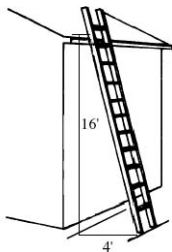
What are ***YOU*** worried about? Help us out by letting us know about safety topics that could help keep your workplace safe!

- (Cont'd from page 1)

- Face the ladder and use both hands to grip the side rails when climbing or descending;



- Do not stand on the top two steps of a step ladder or the top four rungs of a straight ladder; and



- Don't tie ladders together;
- Place a straight or extension ladder at an angle so that the ladder's base is one foot out for every four feet of ladder

working length;

- Don't carry tools up a ladder –hoist tools up to you or wear a toolbelt;
- If your belt buckle goes outside of the side rails, you are reaching too far. Reposition the ladder.

Care and Maintenance

Here are a few on ladder care:

- Avoid makeshift portable ladder repairs;
- Always have a qualified person perform repairs;
- Do not try to straighten or use a bent ladder;
- Store ladders with good ventilation, no tripping hazards, no nearby sources of heat or moisture, and a design that lends itself

to safe withdrawal.

Remember:

Never use a ladder in a strong wind.

Never use a ladder in front of a door unless it is locked, blocked or guarded.

Inspect ladders for potential dangers before using.

Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder

Only one person should be on a ladder at a time.

If one must work near power lines, always use a wooden or fiberglass ladder.

Some information in this newsletter was taken from JJ.Keller and cdc.gov.nasd