

Ladder Safety

Week Number 41 (October 8 - 14) 2017 Edition

Ladders are necessary to all construction trades, with most workers using at least one ladder every day. The misuse of ladders is the cause of many serious injuries each year.

The following rules for the use of ladders will help reduce the number and seriousness of ladder accidents.

- Inspect ladders before use. Make sure that the ladder is free from damage. All defective ladders should be put out of service.
- The base of each ladder should be set firmly and be level on the floor or ground. The use of blocking to level ladder feet is prohibited.
- Moveable ladders shall have safety shoes.
- Areas at the foot and top of the ladder should be kept clear of material and debris. Protect ladders used in locations such as doorways and passages so that they will not be bumped or knocked over.
- Ladder rungs should be kept clear of mud, ice, and other slippery substances.
- Ladders should be long enough so that workers can perform their jobs without climbing higher than the third rung or step from the top.
- Straight ladders should be placed so that the base is a distance from the vertical no greater than one-quarter of the length of the ladder (a pitch of 1 to 4).
- Straight ladders should be securely fastened to a stable support at the top to prevent movement. Long ladders shall be fastened at top and bottom and braced to prevent swaying, binding, or shaking.
- Straight ladders should project at least 36 inches above the platform or landing.
- Face the ladder and use both hands when climbing or descending.
- Tools, materials, and/or equipment must be raised by hand lines or other similar means.
- Do not use metal ladders near electrical lines.
- Job-built ladders with broken, worn, or spilt members shall be discarded.
- Step ladders should be used only in their fully opened position.