



# Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

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## Ladder Safety

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There is absolutely no reason for anybody to get hurt, disabled, or killed while using a ladder. Yet it happens every single day. Somebody steps on the safety sticker that says, "This is not a step!" and ends up with a broken leg. Another worker puts a rock under one of the legs because the ladder is "just not quite stable enough." On the way to the hospital, it occurs to her, through the pain of her broken arm, that maybe that was not such a good idea after all. On another job, a fellow reaches out just a little bit too far and...well, he's no longer with us.

Virtually every single ladder accident could and should have been prevented. It only takes a little bit of common sense about ladder safety to prevent an accident from occurring while using ladders. Stick to the following simple ladder safety rules to ensure that you or your fellow workers are never injured while using a ladder.

### Four rules for safe use of ladders:

- Pick the right ladder for the job you are going to do.
- Make sure the ladder is in good condition.
- Set up the ladder correctly.
- Work safely on the ladder.

### Pick the right ladder:

The ladder should be of the correct type and length. You will probably use an ordinary straight ladder for most purposes. An extension ladder may be required for high work. A stepladder is used when you need a freestanding ladder or one with a tool tray. Some situations may not require a ladder at all. Instead, you may need a scaffold. Never use a metal ladder around any electrical installation.

### Check the condition of the ladder:

- Never use a damaged ladder.
- Make sure all parts of the ladder are in good working order, free from corrosion, rust, rot, cracks, and other defects.
- Check the rungs, side rails, braces, hinges, ropes, and pulleys. See that the rungs are free of slippery substances such as oil.
- Never use a painted ladder because the paint can hide defects.
  - To protect the ladder, use a clear preservative instead of paint.
- Make sure that the non-slip rubber feet are in good condition. Check overall for any signs of warping or twisting.



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## Working safely on a ladder:

- When climbing or working on a ladder, maintain three-point contact. This means that two hands and one foot, or one hand and two feet should be in contact with the ladder at all times.
- Keep centered on the ladder. Here's a way to remember to do so - your belt buckle should remain between the two side rails at all times. Never lean away from the ladder because you can cause it to topple.
- Do not carry tools or materials in your hands. Keep tools in a belt or hoist objects up after you.
- Safety procedures should be adequate and properly explained.
- Do not stand on the top few rungs of any ladder.
- Footwear should have clean soles made of a non-skid material. Leather is too slippery.
- Never move a ladder while you are on it.
- Move slowly and carefully on a ladder.
- Do not work on a ladder if you are ill, overly tired, or possibly under the influence of alcohol or any drug.
- Stay off outdoor ladders during bad weather such as rain, wind, or lightning.
- Certain work situations may require the use of fall prevention equipment such as safety belts or harnesses.
  - Be sure to use this equipment as directed and keep it in good condition.

Ladders are a pretty simple type of equipment. But don't allow that simplicity to get in the way of following safe procedures. As soon as you start feeling like an accident won't happen, the possibility of it occurring skyrockets.

**Ladder inspection is a must so you don't end up in the dust!!**

