

Ladders

What We Don't Know CAN Hurt Us!

Ladders are a commonly used tool. While valuable, ladders come with inherent risk. As with all tools, ladders must be carefully selected, inspected, used and maintained!

Application:

Ladders are often the tool of choice for elevated work, especially mobile, short-term tasks. To ensure safe work with portable ladders, there are certain things we need to know:

Portable Ladder Types

- Straight ladders – single piece ladders, to be leaned against a structure for support.
- Extension ladders – similar to straight ladders in use, extension ladders are multi-section tools that extend in length, according to the ladder user's needs. Use as you would a straight ladder.
- Self-supporting ladders – also called “stepladders,” self-supporting ladders are intended only for mobile work where a quick up-and-down action is needed.
- Never used as a straight or extension ladder - need to be fully unfolded.
- Always self-supporting on a firm, stable surface.

Don't Use Portable Ladders if You Can't SIUM!

1. **Select**—Choose the proper ladder.

- a. Straight & extension ladders lean against a support; stepladders support themselves.

2. **Inspect**—Be sure your ladder is fit for use.

- a. Thoroughly check for damage or excessive wear to the ladder. If in doubt, don't use it!
- b. Contact your Field Manager or Competent Person to verify the ladder's fitness for use.

- c. NEVER use a damaged or defective portable ladder! Tag it “*out of service.*”
 - i. No unauthorized repairs or modifications.
- d. All manufacturer labels and decals are present and readable.
 - i. Stepladders
 - 3) Cap is not damaged or modified
 - 3) Rails are intact – no cracks or splinters; no twisting or other deformity
 - 3) Treads are undamaged – no warping, depressions or cracks/cuts and are free of debris (mud, cement, etc.)
 - 3) Spreaders are not excessively loose – rivets are snug and secure
 - 3) Feet are in good repair – anti-slip treads are present and not damaged
 - 3) Exposed surfaces are not painted or covered with unapproved labels or decals.
 - ii. Straight ladders
 - 3) Rails are intact – no cracks or splinters; no twisting or other deformity
 - 3) Footings are undamaged
 - 3) Exposed surfaces are not painted or covered with unapproved labels or decals.
 - 3) Treads are free of debris (mud, cement, etc.).
 - iii. Extension ladders
 - 3) Same requirements as straight ladders.
 - 3) Pulleys are fully functional and free of defects.
 - 3) Ropes are properly routed through pulleys; not worn or frayed.
 - 3) Ladder sections may never be separated to be used as straight ladders.

3. Use—Be sure to use ladders the way the manufacturer intended.

- a. Ladders are for feet, not for other body parts.
- b. Sitting on top of a ladder is no safer than standing on top of a ladder.
 - i. Stepladders only in a self-supporting position, with spreaders fully engaged.
 - 3) Erected at least 10 feet from guardrail systems.
 - 3) Or, use a positive means of fall protection (Personal Fall Arrest System).
 - ii. Straight ladders & extension ladders properly supported by adjacent structure.
 - 3) Erected w/base 1 foot from support structure for every 4 feet of working height.
 - 3) Erected at least 10 feet from guardrail systems, to ensure proper fall protection.

- 3) Or, use a positive means of fall protection (Personal Fall Arrest System).

4. Maintenance—Ladders must be maintained in fit, safe condition.

- a. Stored to prevent damage; loaded & unloaded carefully when transporting.
- b. Kept in clean condition, ensuring all required labels and decals are present and readable.

Summary

Portable ladders are excellent tools, but require proper selection, inspection, use and maintenance. Only trained, qualified workers should be permitted to work with ladders, under the guidance of a Competent Person. Never take chances with ladders—it's up to you!

Date:	Company Name:		
Project Number/Name:	Meeting Location:	Person Conducting Meeting:	

Items Discussed:

Problem Areas or Concern:

CREW SIGN-OFF

Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

Crew Members: _____

Crew Members: _____

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