

SAFE Work Practice

Portable Straight & Extension Ladders

CSAM # 4



Falls from portable straight and extension ladders are a significant cause of injuries in construction. Portable ladders should only be used for short-term work where a safer means of access, such as scaffolds, elevating work platforms, stairs, man lifts, etc. is not available.

Hazards: -ladder rung/side rail failure, ladder instability, slipping off ladder, falling off ladder (losing balance), strain/sprains from lifting and placing ladder and contact with energized electrical lines

Do

- Ensure that a commercially manufactured portable ladder complies with CSA and/or ANSI standards
- Inspect the ladder prior to each use.
- Place ladder on a stable, level base
- Secure the ladder at top and bottom
- Face the ladder when climbing up or down and keep the centre of your body within the side rails.
- Keep three points of contact when on a ladder.

Do Not

- Use a worn or damaged ladder
- Locate a ladder too close to electrical power lines
- Carry tools and materials on ladders
- Over-extend or lean-out on a ladder
- Allow more than 1 person on a ladder at a time
- Do not place a ladder against flexible or moveable surfaces.
- Do not stand a ladder on any of its rungs.

General Safe Work Practices

1. Choose the proper type and grade of ladder for the job. Check the manufacturer's ratings and ladder marking's to ensure it is set-up and used properly.
2. Inspect the ladder to ensure no bent or damaged steps/rungs or side rails and that all parts are in working order.
3. Have another worker assist with carrying and placing the ladder in position.
4. Hold the ladder in place or secure ladder at bottom and ensure the base is level, solid and stable.
5. Evaluate that the upper contact point of the ladder to ensure it is solid and structurally sound.
6. Locate the base of the ladder 1 metre out from the wall for every 4 metres of height.
7. Ensure that there is proper section overlap for an extension ladder. (one metre, for a ladder less than 11 m in length, 1.25 m for a ladder between 11 m and 15m, 1.5 m for a ladder over 15 m in length)
8. Secure the ladder at the top and extend the ladder at least 1 meter above the landing, if using the ladder for access from one level to another.
9. Before mounting a ladder, clean the boot soles if they are muddy or slippery.
10. Once the ladder is secured and placed at the correct elevation and angle, face the ladder and climb using the 3 point contact rule at all times. (Tools and materials should not be carried, but hoisted separately once in a safe position).
11. Secure the ladder at the top and extend the ladder at least 1 metre above the landing if using for access/egress.

Regulatory Reference:

Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 Part 13 - Entrances, Exits, Stairways and Ladders

Additional Standards: -CSA Standard CAN3-Z11-M81 (R2005), *Portable Ladders* -ANSI Standard A14.1/14.2/14.5 - 2000, *American National Standard for Ladders - Wood /Metal/Plastic (Safety Requirements)*

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