

SAFE Work Practice Portable Stepladders

CSAM # 5



Falls from ladders are a significant cause of injuries in construction. Stepladders should only be used for short-term work where a safer means of access, such as scaffolds, elevating work platforms, stairs, manlifts, or other devices is not available.

Hazards: -ladder rung failure, ladder instability and tipping, slipping off ladder, falling off ladder, pinch points closing/opening ladder, strains/sprains from lifting stepladder.

Do

- Ensure that stepladders conform to CSA and/or ANSI standards.
- Inspect the stepladder prior to each use.
- Place the stepladder on a stable, level base.
- Open stepladder spreaders fully and lock in place.
- Face the stepladder when climbing up or down.
- Keep three points of contact when climbing the stepladder.

Do Not

- Use a worn or damaged stepladder.
- Locate a stepladder too close to electrical power lines.
- Over-reach or lean-out on a stepladder.
- Stand on the top two steps of the stepladder, unless designed with a railed platform.
- Allow more than 1 person on the stepladder at a time.

General Safe Work Practices

1. Choose proper type and grade of stepladder for the job.
2. Use a stepladder that is about 1 m (3 ft) shorter than the highest point you have to reach.
3. Check the manufacturer's ratings and ladder markings to ensure it is suitable for the task.
4. Inspect the stepladder to ensure no bent rungs or side rails and that all parts are in proper working order.
5. Make sure the spreader bars are undamaged and can be locked in place.
6. Place the stepladder in position, ensuring that the base is level, solid and on stable ground. Do not use stepladders on soft ground where one leg may sink farther into the ground than others.
7. Place a stepladder at right angles to the work, with either the front or back of the steps facing the work. Keep the stepladder close to the work.
8. Ensure that the stepladder spreader bars are fully extended and locked in position.
9. Face the stepladder and climb using the 3 point contact rule at all times.

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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