

Safe Work Procedure

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Ladders - Working With Ladders

Introduction:

Ladders of all types are used extensively in residential construction. Workers' Compensation statistics show that falls, including those from ladders, are one of highest causes of injury in this industry. Construction ladders must be grade 1 ladders.

Requirements for safe ladder use

- Ladders should be inspected before use. Ladders with loose, broken, or missing rungs, split or bent side rails or other defects, must be removed from service.
- The base of a ladder's side rails must rest on a firm, level foundation. Non-self supporting ladders (straight ladders) need to have non-slip bases or spikes, depending upon the terrain. Such devices need to be maintained in good condition.
- The top of ladders must rest against a bearing surface of sufficient strength that will not deform under load or shatter (in the case of glass or similar material).
- When in use, portable ladders other than stepladders must be placed using a maximum 4 vertical to 1 horizontal ladder slope.
- Portable ladders other than stepladders must be of sufficient length to project approximately 1 m (3ft.) above the upper landing to which it provides access.
- Ladders must be tied, blocked, or otherwise secured to prevent them from slipping.
- Aluminum extension ladders must be construction rated; and when extended, a minimum of 1m (3ft.) of the two pieces of ladder must be made.
- Metal ladders or ladders with steel reinforcements must not be used where electrical hazards exist.
- Short sections of ladders must not be spliced together to make longer ladders.
- Ladders should never be used as scaffolding planks.
- Ladders should not be placed in doorways, passageways, or other areas where they interfere with other work activities.
- Tools and materials must not be carried when climbing ladders. Suitable hoisting equipment must be used for this purpose.

No worker is permitted to work from the top two rungs of a single or extension ladder or the top two steps of a stepladder unless permitted by the manufacturer.