



SAFETY MATTERS

RISK
MANAGEMENT
NEWSLETTER

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MARCH 4, 2022

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PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY

OBJECTIVE To help prevent falls from portable ladders.

At home you might see spring as an opportunity to get your ladder out and complete some tasks when the weather is nice. However, in many places, there is still a changeable forecast at this time of year. Workers who must be out on ladders all year round need to be ready for anything.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY

Falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination and extension) are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries.

During this time of year, some mornings can still be very cold, meaning that ice, frost, and dew could cause a hazard. In addition, the weather might be fine when workers start their shift, but it can quickly cloud over and cause showers. Preparation is key here.

Workers should check that the ladder is in good condition to prevent an accident. They should also make sure that they have the right kind of ladder for the job.



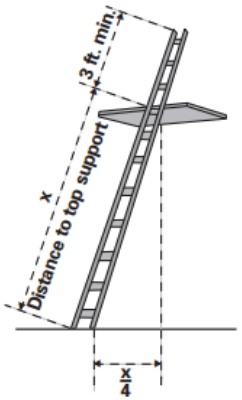


TIPS FOR PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY

- Read and follow all labels/markings on the ladder.
- Avoid electrical hazards! Look for overhead power lines before handling a ladder. Avoid using a metal ladder near power lines or exposed energized electrical equipment.
- Always inspect the ladder prior to using it. If the ladder is damaged, it must be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.
- Always maintain a 3-point (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) contact on the ladder when climbing. Keep your body near the middle of the step and always face the ladder while climbing.
- Only use ladders and appropriate accessories (ladder levelers, jacks, or hooks) for their designed purposes.
- Ladders must be free of any 3-point contact slippery material on the rungs, steps, or feet.
- Do not use a self-supporting ladder (e.g., step ladder) as a single ladder or in a partially closed position.
- Do not use the top step/rung of a ladder as a step/rung unless it was designed for that purpose.
- Use a ladder only on a stable and level surface unless it has been secured (top or bottom) to prevent displacement.
- Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- Do not move or shift a ladder while a person or equipment is on the ladder.
- An extension or straight ladder used to access an elevated surface must extend at least 3 feet above the point of support. Do not stand on the three top rungs of a straight, single or extension ladder.
- The proper angle for setting up a ladder is to place its base a quarter of the working length of the ladder from the wall or other vertical surface.
- A ladder placed in any location where it can be displaced by other work activities should be secured to prevent displacement or a barricade must be erected to keep traffic away from the ladder. The distance at the

bottom of the ladder should be one-fourth ($1/4$) the distance to the top where the ladder comes in contact with the wall or roof support.

- Be sure that all locks on an extension ladder are properly engaged.
- Do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder. Be aware of the ladder's load rating and of the weight it is supporting, including the weight of any tools or equipment.



CONTENT SOURCE

Occupational Safety and Health Administration



This California Schools JPA fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.





SIGN-IN SHEET

PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Date: _____ Organization: _____ Department: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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