

MAFES Dawg Tracks

May 1, 2017



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Safety Tips:
Prevent Ladder Accidents

Portable ladders are one of the most commonly used pieces of equipment in most industries. They are handy, versatile, simple to use, practical, and effective. They are used by many different people and in many different projects or tasks.

However, as useful as they are, accidents with ladders are pretty common. Falls are the most common type of accident resulting from faulty ladders, improper set up of the ladder, or incorrect use of the ladder.

According to the **Center to Protect Workers' Rights**, each year about 50 construction workers are killed by ladder accidents. Twice as many falls occur with descending or coming down from ladders as compared to ascending or going up them. One other interesting statistic from the **U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** is that estimates show that approximately 164,000 emergency-room treated injuries are due to falls each year. Following are some safety tips that will aid you in the safe use of ladders:

- ✓ Be sure that the ladder is the right height and that it will handle the amount of weight it will need to do the job.
- ✓ If you are uncertain about the ladder's height or weight for the job, ask your supervisor for help.
- ✓ Check to see what the ladder is made from. Do not ever use a metal ladder around overhead power lines.
- ✓ Perform a close inspection of the ladder before each use, checking for:
 - ~Loose, missing, or damaged rungs.
 - ~Rungs must be clean with no oil, mud, or debris on them.
 - ~Loose or missing bolts, screws, or nails.
 - ~Broken or missing braces.
 - ~Damaged hinge spreaders.
 - ~Dents in metal ladders.
 - ~Cracks, splinters, or evidence of rot in wooden ladders.
 - ~Worn non-slip bases.
 - ~Missing safety feet.

If any of these problems are found upon your inspection, ask your supervisor for a replacement ladder.

LADDER SAFETY DO'S AND DON'TS-

DO:

- Be sure that the bottom of the ladder is secure and the locking devices are secure before you start to climb.
- Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder near overhead power lines—not a metal one.
- Avoid reaching out or up too far while on the ladder.
- Remember to use the 3-point contact when climbing or descending the ladder.
- Stay off the top two steps of the ladder and only one person should be on the ladder at any given time.
- Ask for help (someone to hold the ladder while you're climbing or descending).

PROPER LADDER SETUP-

- ~Set up a ladder only on firm, level, and non-slip surfaces.
- ~If you are resting a ladder against a wall, position it so that it is parallel with the wall.
- ~The base of the ladder should be one foot from the wall for every four feet of wall height.
- ~Be sure that the ladder extends three feet above the roof.
- ~Be sure to open folding ladders all the way and be sure that locking devices are in place.
- ~Do not set up a ladder in front of a door.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS-

- ✓ Ask someone to assist you by holding the ladder.
- ✓ Make sure that your shoes or boots are clean, dry, and have non-skid soles.
- ✓ Be sure that you don't have any dangling shoelaces or loose pant legs to get caught.
- ✓ Always maintain a 3-point contact with the ladder (two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand) when climbing. Keep your body in the middle of the ladder and always climb facing the ladder.
- ✓ Don't carry hand tools or other items up the ladder. If you have tools or other items that need to be with you, ask for help from a co-worker.
- ✓ Stay off the top two steps or rungs of the ladder.
- ✓ Don't reach too far up or out from the ladder.
- ✓ Don't try to move the ladder while you are on it.
- ✓ Remember: Only one person on the ladder at a time.
- ✓ Don't store anything on the ladder.
- ✓ Read and follow all instructions regarding use of the ladder.
- ✓ Do not exceed the maximum load rating of the ladder.

Because ladders are useful and commonly used, employers usually take their use with employees for granted. This is totally wrong! As stated above, the CPSC stated that ladder accidents are one of the major sources of injuries on and off the job.

DON'T:

- Use boxes, chairs or other items to replace the need for a ladder.
- Walk under a ladder when someone is on it.
- Climb a ladder if you feel dizzy, ill, or afraid of heights.
- Set up a ladder in front of a door.
- Carry hand tools when climbing up a ladder.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES/MSU-ES (662) 566-2201
Excerpts: www.gemplers.com
<http://dir.ca.gov/dosh/etools>
11/28/2016

**PUT SAFETY INTO ACTION –
STAY OUT OF TRACTION!!
YOU FALL, YOU CALL, WE HAUL
THAT'S ALL!
ACCIDENTS HURT <><><> SAFETY DOESN'T**