

LADDERS (PORTABLE/EXTENSION) SAFE WORK PRACTICES

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OH&S Code Part 8, Sections 124-137

Ladders are used to access heights or as a temporary work platform for short periods. Before using any ladder, make sure it is in good condition and is the right ladder for the job to be done.

Ladders (portable/extension) safe work practices

A. INSPECTIONS

- When using a portable ladder or an extension ladder, do the following:
- Use only CSA standard ladders
- Inspect the ladder for defects prior to use. Cracks at rivet holes on metal ladders should not be used.
- Don't use painted ladders.
- Remove from service all ladders with broken rungs, split rails, worn or broken safety feet, or frayed or damaged ropes
- Ensure rungs are clean & dry. Look for ice or grease.

B. POOR POSITIONS OF WORKER

- Fall protection required unless 3 conditions met. 1. Only light temporary duties. 2. center of gravity is over middle of ladder at all times. 3. 3 point contact at all times.
- Do not work from the top 3 rungs of a ladder
- Only 1 person at a time should use a ladder
- Extend ladders used for ascending or descending from one level to another at least 3 feet (.91 m) above the upper landing
- **Do not** overreach to the side while on a ladder (climb down and move the ladder over a few feet to a new position)
- Always face the ladder when using it
- Grip the ladder firmly and use the three-point contact method when moving up or down
- Never let your shoulders or hips go outside of the vertical rails
- The minimum overlap on an extension ladder should be 1 meter (3.28 ft.) unless the manufacturer specifies the overlap
- **Do not** carry anything while ascending or descending a ladder.
- Only one worker at a time on one ladder.

C. POOR POSITIONS OF LADDER

- When setting up a ladder, secure the base and "walk" the ladder up into place
- Set the ladder at the proper angle, a ratio of 1 horizontal to every 4 vertical
- Set the step ladder at the proper angle, a ratio of 1 horizontal to every 6 vertical. Braces should be locked.

- Place the ladder feet on a firm surface
- Place step ladders on level clean surfaces
- Make sure the ladder is secured at top and bottom against movement
- Keep both metal and wood ladders away from electrical sources
- - Lock or block doors when ladders are used in front of them
- **Do not** use ladders in horizontal position as runways or scaffolds
- Only use a stepladder in the fully opened position with the spreader bars locked
- **Do not** use the top of a stepladder as a support for a scaffold
- Observe the following ladder length limits:
 - Stepladders - 20 feet (6.10 m)
 - Trestle ladders, extension sections, or base sections of extension trestle ladders - 16 feet (4.88 m)
 - Single ladders - 30 feet (9.14 m)
 - Extension ladders (two sections) - 48 feet (14.6 m)
 - Minimum lap for ladders up to 36 feet (10.97m) - 3 foot (.914m) lap
 - Minimum lap for ladders 36 feet (11m) to 48 feet (14.6 m) - 4 foot (1.22m) lap.