

## SAFETY TOPICS

# LADDER SAFETY

Who doesn't know how to use a ladder? Lean it against the wall and climb, right? However, as useful as they are, ladders are dangerous!

### Before Climbing a Ladder:

- Make your ladder selection based on type of work to be done, the expected weight and environment.
- Check your ladder's rating -- don't overload it!
- Check ladder condition. Damaged ladders cause falls!
- Make sure the ladder is placed on a firm, slip resistant surface.
- Watch for wires, power lines, and overhead light fixtures.

### Proper Ladder Placement:

Set up extension ladders using the **Four-to-One Rule**. The first step is to measure the rise of the ladder, which is the height from the ground up to the point where the ladder rests against the object. For every four feet of rise, the base of the ladder should be one foot away from the object. The works out to a 75-degree angle.



### EXAMPLE

When a sixteen-foot ladder leans against a wall, place the four feet from that wall. Less, and you risk tipping backward; more and the weight capacity falls quickly as the angle decreases.

A quick check is to stand with your toes touching the ladder base, reach your arms out forward and your fingers should just touch the ladder.

Keep ladders well away from power lines! Watch for wires, power lines, and overhead light fixtures. Know what the appropriate power line separation distances are. If you need to get close to these limits or are working with electricity, always use a non-conductive ladder!

### Secure the Ladder; 3-Point Contact; Watch Your Footing

A study done in 2012 by the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety revealed that 84% of step ladder and 83% of extension ladder falls are caused by three things: ladder movement, lost balance and footing. Almost 54% of all falls from extension ladder falls are caused when the ladder moved.

To reduce your risk of falling by more than 80%:

- Use ladder stabilizers and levelers & secure your ladder to a solid structure every time you climb!
- Use three point contact (really, slow down and make sure you really do use three point contact!).
- Watch your footing -- wear boots with a heel to prevent your foot from slipping through the rungs.

While on the topic of falling off ladders -- remember that if you plan to get off the ladder onto another level, the ladder should reach three feet above the level you are climbing to. Consider using walk-through attachments for your ladder, as they make the transition between ladder and destination easy and safer!

### Tips and Tricks:

- Wipe your soles clean of oil, grease and anything slippery.
- Always climb facing the ladder.
- Unless the ladder is designed for two people, allow only one person on it at a time.
- Reposition your ladder instead of reaching out -- keep your body's center inside the ladder rails.

### INTERESTING LADDER FACTS

- Each year, more than 300 people die in preventable ladder falls.
- There are 100K ladder injuries/year
- 50% falling more than 11 feet die.
- The Czech Republic has highest rate of ladder fatalities.
- The US ranks #14 in ladder fatalities with 1.2 deaths per million.
- The UK is safer, ranking 40th with fewer than 0.1 death per million.

**SAFETY MEETING ATTENDANCE**

**LADDER SAFETY**

**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Trained By:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

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**ATTENDEES:**

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