



ALABAMA MUNICIPAL INSURANCE CORPORATION MUNICIPAL WORKERS COMPENSATION FUND, INC.



Loss Control Division

PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY

Date: _____ Time: _____ Department: _____ Person Conducting: _____

Meeting Objective: To familiarize or remind employees of the normal precautions and safety rules they should be aware of when working with portable ladders.

Ladders are simple devices used for safe climbing; their simplicity may be their biggest fault. Workers using them tend to mistake simplicity for harmlessness, forgetting precautions or rules of proper use. This kind of mistake causes thousands of accidents and disabling injuries every year. Review the following rules concerning ladder maintenance and inspection, ladder placement, the correct way to ascend or descend ladders, and rules regarding ladder transport.

Ladder maintenance and inspection

1. All rungs and steps should be intact and in good condition.
2. Metal steps should be covered with a non-slip material.
3. Steps should be clean and free of grease and oil.
4. All nuts, bolts, rivets, etc... should be tight and in place.
5. Metal parts should be kept lubricated.
6. Frayed or badly worn rope should be replaced.
7. All ladders that are broken, worn, or have been exposed to fire or corrosion should be removed from service.
8. Wooden ladders should never be painted. They should be coated with a clear preservative.
9. Ladders should be stored in a dry, well-ventilated area with moderate temperatures.
10. Horizontally stored ladders should be supported on the ends and in the middle.
11. Ladders should be inspected frequently. Those removed for repair or destruction should be tagged or marked as "Dangerous, Do Not Use".

Ladder Placement

1. Place a ladder so that the horizontal distance from the base to the vertical plane of the support is approximately one-fourth the ladder's length between supports. For example, place a 12-ft ladder so that the bottom is 3 ft away from the object against which the top is leaning.
2. Do not use ladders in a horizontal position as runways or scaffolds.
3. Never place a ladder in front of a door that opens toward the ladder unless the door is locked, blocked or guarded.
4. Do not place a ladder against a window pane or sash.
5. Never lean a ladder against unsecured backing such as loose boxes or barrels.
6. When using a ladder for access to high places, securely lash or otherwise fasten the ladder (top and bottom) to prevent it from slipping. Have someone hold a ladder steady until the top of the ladder, be

- properly secured.
7. Secure both the bottom and top of a ladder to prevent displacement when using a ladder for access to a scaffold.
 8. Extend a ladder's side rails at least 3 ft above the top landing.
 9. DANGER! metal ladders conduct electricity. Do not let ladders of any material come in contact with live electrical wires.
 10. Make sure a step ladder is fully open and spreaders secure.
 11. Place a ladder on a firm surface and secure footing. Do not place a ladder on slippery surfaces.
 12. Prior to climbing a straight ladder, "set" the ladder feet by standing on the bottom rung. A properly positioned and secure ladder should not have any lateral movement when the ladder feet are set.

Ladder usage

1. Hold on with both hands when going up or down a ladder. If material must be handled, raise or lower it with a rope either before going down or after climbing to the desired level.
2. Always face a ladder when ascending or descending.
3. Never slide down a ladder.
4. Be sure shoes are not greasy, muddy, or slippery before climbing.
5. Do not climb higher than the third rung from the top on straight or extension ladders, or the second tread from the top on stepladders. Never tie or otherwise secure two ladders together to gain additional height.
6. Allow only one person on a ladder at a time.
7. Use a ladder of sufficient length so that workers do not have to stretch or reach.
8. Carry tools on a tool belt, not in the hand.
9. Do not climb on the bracing on the back legs of stepladders.
10. Do not overload a ladder. Check duty rating or working load. Type III, light duty/Household ladders, should never be used for construction or in industrial settings.
11. Do not leave ladders unattended.

Transporting Ladders

1. When you hand-carry a ladder, keep the front end elevated, especially around blind corners, in aisles, and through doorways. You will reduce the chance of striking another person with the front of the ladder. Long ladders should be carried by two persons, one "at each end and on opposite sides of the ladder.
2. When you transport a ladder in a truck or trailer, place it parallel to the bed for maximum support. Avoid tossing, throwing, or dropping it in the bed.
3. If you transport a long ladder on a short truck bed over long distances, support the ladder so it will not sag or bend.
4. Drive slowly over rough terrain. Tie ladders down securely to eliminate nicking, gouging, chafing, and road shock; if side stakes are available, use them to prevent lateral swing.

Show the types of portable ladders used in your operation. Go through an inspection of the ladders and show proper use. Ask employees to describe close calls or accidents they have had involving ladders and discuss what precautions could have been taken to avoid the situations described.

SIGNATURES OF ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE

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NOTE: This document is not intended to be legal advice. It does not identify all the issues surrounding the particular topic. Public agencies are encouraged to review their procedures with an expert or an attorney who is knowledgeable about the topic. Reliance on this information is at the sole risk of the user.¹
