



FACT SHEET

Standard: Fall Protection

LADDERS: CORRECT SELECTION, SETUP, AND USE

When is a ladder needed?

- A ladder is required anytime there is a break in elevation of 19 inches or more.

Selection and Set-Up:

- Choose the appropriately sized ladder: A typical worker will be most comfortable working 5ft above where they stand.
- Inspect ladder for structural integrity before use (discard or professionally repair any broken ladders).
- Rungs: All ladders must have parallel and uniformly spaced rungs free of any slip hazards or cracks.
- Foldout ladders must have a metal spreader or locking device to hold the ladder open.
- Level: place ladder on level surface.
- Secure or barricade off all ladders placed in high traffic areas (doorways, active passageways, driveways, active construction sites).
- Step Ladder: The user is never to stand on the top two steps or be closer than 2ft from the top of the ladder. So, if the individual is working at a height of 8ft, a 5ft step ladder may be used at the correct height.
- Straight or Extension Ladders: The user is never allowed to use the top 3 rungs or be closer than 3ft from the top of the ladder. This means that a typical worker will have an effective working height 2ft above the top of the step or extension ladder.
- Angle: Portable non-self-supporting ladders use the four to one rule. For every 4ft of height the ladder must move out 1ft from the wall.
- Never fasten two ladders together to provide a longer section unless both ladders are specifically designed to do so.

Proper Use of a ladder:

- Always face forward and have at least one hand grasped on the ladder when climbing up or down.
- Keep ladders free of oils/grease and other slipping hazards.
- Don't shift, move or extend a ladder while in use.
- Don't load ladder beyond the maximum intended load or manufacturer's rated capacity
- Don't stand on the top 2 rungs of a step ladder and the top 3 rungs of an extension/straight ladder