

Toolbox Talk # 15.02 – Ladders II

Ladders are indispensable additions to jobsites. While they are uncomplicated and simple to use, you shouldn't take ladder safety for granted. Ladder problems are easy for OSHA inspectors to spot and therefore companies receive numerous citations every year.

OSHA finds the most violations of the following OSHA rules at jobsites:

- When portable ladders are used to get to an upper landing surface, the side rails must extend three feet above the upper landing. If that is not possible because of the ladders length, then it must be tied-off at the top to a non-moveable support, and a grab rail must be provided for getting off and on. The extension can never be so short that ladder deflection under a load would cause the ladder to slip off its support.
- A stairway or ladder must be provided at all worker access points where there is a break in elevation of 19 inches or more, and no ramp, runway, sloped embankment, or personnel hoist is provided.
- Your employer must provide a ladder training program. The program must ensure you can recognize hazards related to ladders, and know how to minimize these hazards.
- A portable ladder with defects such as, but not limited to broken or missing rungs, cleats, or steps; broken or split rails; corroded or other faulty or defective components, must either be immediately marked to easily identify it as defective, or be tagged with "Do Not Use" or similar language, and be withdrawn from use until repaired.
- The top or top step of a stepladder must not be used as a step.

The OSHA regulations concentrate on two areas when using ladders—their condition and their use. The following examples of the many rules for ladders point out these two areas.

Ladder condition

Ladders must be free of oil, grease, and other slip hazards.

Ladders must be inspected by a competent person for visible defects periodically, and after any occurrence affecting their safe use.

Ladder Use

Ladders must be placed on stable and level surfaces unless tied off to prevent accidental movement.

Unless designed to do so, ladders must never be tied or fastened together to make them longer.

A ladder must not be moved, shifted, or extended while being used.

When going up or down a ladder, you must:

- face the ladder.
- use at least one hand to grasp the ladder.
- never carry objects/loads that could cause you to lose your balance and fall.

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Project: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Company: _____

Other safety issues covered or comments from crew members:

Attendees:

Name: (please print)	Signature:	Company:
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