

CPSC Offers Safety Tips to Prevent Ladder Injuries

Lesson ID: LL-U-02-77 (*Source: GIDEP*)

Originator: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Office of Information and Public Affairs Washington, D.C. 20207

Date: 3/28/2002 **Contact:** CPSC Media Contact: Mark Ross, (301) 504-0580, Ext. 1188

Classifier: N/A **Reviewer:** Christina Coccagna, SAIC, (301) 353-8302

Statement: Each year there are more than 164,000 emergency room-treated injuries in the U.S. relating to ladders. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) offers the following safety precautions to help prevent these injuries.

Discussion: CPSC Offers Safety Tips to Prevent Ladder Injuries:

1. Make sure the weight your ladder is supporting does not exceed its maximum load rating (user plus materials). There should only be one person on the ladder at one time.
2. Use a ladder that is the proper length for the job. Proper length is a minimum of 3 feet extending over the roofline or working surface. The three top rungs of a straight, single or extension ladder should not be stood on.
3. Straight, single or extension ladders should be set up at about a 75-degree angle.
4. All metal ladders should have slip-resistant feet.
5. Metal ladders will conduct electricity. Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder in the vicinity of power lines or electrical equipment. Do not let a ladder made from any material contact live electric wires.
6. Be sure all locks on extension ladders are properly engaged.
7. The ground under the ladder should be level and firm. Large flat wooden boards braced under the ladder can level a ladder on uneven ground or soft ground. A good practice is to have a helper hold the bottom of the ladder.
8. Do not place a ladder in front of a door that is not locked, blocked or guarded.
9. Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder at all times. Do not lean too far to the side while working.
10. Do not use a ladder for any purpose other than that for which it was intended.
11. Do not step on the top step, bucket shelf or attempt to climb or stand on the rear section of a

stepladder.

12. Never leave a raised ladder unattended.

13. Follow use instruction labels on ladders.

ISM Code(s): Analyze Hazards

Priority Descriptor: Blue / Information

Improper Use of Portable Ladder

Lesson ID: L-2005-OR-BWXTY12-1201 (*Source: User Submitted*)

Originator: D. A. Taylor

Date: 12/5/2005 **Contact:** E. F. Irwin, 865 241-2581

Classifier: J. A. Nations **Reviewer:**

Statement: Personnel who use portable (step) ladders must be aware of the manufacturer's label requirements for safe use of the ladder.

Discussion: A group of workers planning on using a powered aerial lift to install overhead equipment but the lift was not charged when the workers arrived. The work package allowed the use of portable ladders so a decision was made to use ladders to perform the task. During performance, one worker was observed straddling the top of a double-sided (steps on both sides) step ladder. The worker was then observed sitting on top of the ladder. Work was stopped and the use of the ladder was reviewed with the worker.

Analysis: Ladder manufacturers are required by OSHA to label their ladders with requirements for safe use. Because this was a two-sided step ladder with steps on both sides, straddling the top of the ladder was not immediately confirmed by the observer as an unsafe act. When the worker sat on the top, it was evident that the ladder was being used improperly. All ladder manufacturers prohibit sitting on the top of a step ladder. A review of the manufacturer's label on this ladder revealed that straddling the ladder was also prohibited.

Actions: Proper use of the step ladder was discussed with the worker, then shared with the entire work crew. An emphasis was placed on reading and following the manufacturer's label information. As step ladders are used by many personnel at Y-12 and at home, this lessons

learned is intended to raise ladder safety awareness and encourage others to review the manufacturer's labels and understand how to use ladders safely. Inspect ladders before use and never use a damaged ladder. Never paint a ladder as it could mask defects, follow manufacturer's load limits, never stand on the top or next to the top step, never sit on top of a ladder. A ladder is a useful tool for many tasks but must be treated with respect and used properly both on the job and at home.

ISM Code(s): Develop / Implement Controls, Perform Work

Priority Descriptor: Blue / Information

If you have any questions or comments:

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