

Ladder Safety Policy



Falls from ladders are a leading cause of serious and even fatal injury. Here's a general ladder safety policy that you can adapt based on your own operations, the equipment you use and the specific OHS requirements of your jurisdiction, e.g., regarding which ANSI, CSA or other standard ladder construction, design and installation must meet.

1. PURPOSE

ABC Company has adopted this Policy to ensure the safe and appropriate selection, use, inspection and maintenance of fixed and portable ladders at its workplaces in accordance with the [*province name*] Occupational Health and Safety Regulation ("Regulation") as well as the ABC Company Occupational Health and Safety Program ("OHS Program"), and other applicable requirements and standards.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

ABC Company will implement measures to prevent fall and other injuries to workers who use or work near ladders at its worksites.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for purposes of this Policy:

- **Combination ladder:** A portable ladder capable of being used either as a stepladder or as a single or extension ladder which may also be capable of being used as a trestle ladder or a stairwell ladder.

- **Extension ladder:** A non-self-supporting portable ladder adjustable in length consisting of two or more sections traveling in guides or brackets or the equivalent and so arranged as to permit length adjustment.
- **Fixed ladder:** A ladder that is permanently attached to a structure.
- **Stepladder:** A self-supporting, stair-type ladder that has self-supporting ladders with flat steps and hinged backs, may be constructed of aluminum, fiberglass, or wood, and which is used primarily in warehouses or other indoor environments where rolling surfaces are smooth and level.

4. SCOPE

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that all workers engaged to work at ABC Company work sites who are or may be exposed to ladder hazards are properly protected regardless of who pays or employs those workers, including:

- Full- or part-time workers employed by ABC Company;
- Temporary employees placed by an outside agency to work at the site;
- Contract labourers engaged to perform work at the site;
- Volunteers who work at the site for free; and
- Workers employed by prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors to perform work at the site under a contract with ABC Company.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Safe ladder selection and usage is a collective responsibility.

5.1 Upper Management

ABC Company officers, directors and upper managers are responsible for overall implementation and review of this Policy, as well as ensuring the resources necessary to ensure

its effective implementation.

5.2 OHS Coordinator

The ABC Company OHS Coordinator is responsible for carrying out the safety measures set out in this Policy for selecting, installing, maintaining, inspecting and using ladders, as well as for ensuring all workers are appropriately trained in ladder safety.

5.3 Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring their workers are provided safe, serviceable, and appropriate ladders and the necessary training to use them correctly, and that they use those ladders safely and in accordance with this Policy. Supervisors are also responsible for coordinating maintenance, repairs or replacement of ladders.

5.4 Workers

Workers are responsible for selecting the appropriate ladder for the task, inspecting the ladder before the task and using the safe work procedures set forth in this Policy and the OHS Program, as well as for reporting incidents, defects or dangerous conditions of ladders.

6. LADDER SELECTION

Different ladders are made for specific uses. For a given task, workers must select the right ladder to ensure their safety with consideration given to the working height, capacity, type, placement and condition of ladder for your work. Prior to purchasing a ladder, check with the OHS Coordinator for specifications. New ladders must meet or exceed ANSI Type I-A specifications, with preference given to fiberglass construction.

Portable Ladder Ratings

TYPE	DUTY RATING	WORKING LOAD
IA	Industrial	Extra heavy 300 lbs. maximum
I	Industrial	Heavy 250 lbs. maximum
II	Commercial	Medium 225 lbs. maximum
III	Household	Light 200 lbs. maximum

Fiberglass ladders must comply with American National Standard A14.5-1992 (or newer). Wood ladders must comply with American National Standard A14.1-1994 (or newer). Metal ladders must comply with American National Standard A14.2-1990 (or newer).

7. STEP LADDERS

Step ladders must have a metal spreader that locks the ladder open and should only be used on firm and level surfaces. The maximum allowable length for a step ladder is 20 feet. These must never be used as a straight-type ladder (leaned up against a wall for use), as the footing was not designed for safe use in this manner. Never stand or sit on the top two steps of a step ladder! A longer ladder may be required to safely perform a given task.

8. STRAIGHT-TYPE LADDERS

Straight-type ladders must be leaned up against a stable surface, with a 1:4 slope (1 foot away from the wall for every 4 feet in height). They may be constructed of aluminum, fiberglass, or wood, in either single or extendable lengths. The maximum allowable length for a single ladder is 30 feet, while extension ladders may reach up to 72 feet. Both should be placed on firm, stable footings, or utilize leg extensions or non-slip feet. Straight-type ladders should extend at least

3 feet above the accessed area, and they must be tied off to a secure anchor point if they are to be used repeatedly in the same spot.

9. ROLLING LADDERS

Rolling ladders must have integral handrails and locking devices for stability. Most rolling ladders are constructed of steel, so be aware of conductivity risks when working near electrical equipment.

10. EXTENSION LADDERS

Extension ladders must be equipped with locks that securely hold the sections of the ladder in the extended position. Extension ladders may not exceed the maximum length specified in the Regulation. If a section of an extension ladder is extended, the extended section must overlap another section for at least: (a) one metre, for a ladder less than 11 m in length; (b) 1.25 m, for a ladder between 11 m and 15 m in length; or (c) 1.5 m, for a ladder over 15 m in length. No section of an extension ladder may exceed 9 m in length

11. FIXED LADDERS

Fixed ladders must meet the most recent version of ANSI A14.3. Other than an access ladder on a tower, water tank, chimney or similar structure which has a safety device to provide protection if a worker using the ladder falls vertical, fixed ladders must: (a) have rest platforms at no more than 30 foot intervals; (b) be offset at each rest platform; (c) where the ladder extends over 16 feet, above grade, floor or landing, have a safety cage commencing no more than 7 feet above grade, floor or landing and continuing at least 36 inches above the top landing with openings to permit access by a worker to rest platforms or to the top landing; (d) have side rails that extend 36 inches above the landing; and (e) have rungs which are at least 6 inches from the wall and spaced at regular intervals.

12. LADDER USE

Never use a ladder unless you have been trained. Always use three points of contact when using ladders (e.g.: two feet and one hand in contact with the ladder). Portable ladders are to be used by only one person at a time, unless specifically designed otherwise. Protect the base of ladders in high traffic areas. If you must close an area due to safety concerns, barricade access routes and post alternatives, as appropriate. If you cannot close an area, you must have another employee guard the ladder base. Make sure ladder treads are clear of mud and debris before using. ABC Company employees may only use a contractor-owned ladder with the contractor's permission and only after assessing the ladders' condition.

Never:

- Carry awkward loads while using a ladder. Use ropes to haul heavy items up once you have reached your working height or surface.
- Place tools or supplies on ladders steps if they could fall. Many injuries are caused by falling objects.
- Use wood or metal ladders around exposed, energized electrical equipment. Ladders can provide energy an easy path to ground.
- Paint a ladder. Paint conceals defects and can cover rating labels.
- Reach far out from or turn excessively while on a ladder. These actions risk destabilizing the ladder.
- Store a ladder in the rain or direct sun. These practices shorten ladder service lives.
- Lean a ladder on windows, unsecured surfaces, or other unstable support. Your support point must be as stable as your base.
- Use a defective ladder. Report these to the OHS Coordinator for repair or disposal.

13. LADDER INSPECTION

The safety of ladders must be assessed by the user prior to each use. Only ladders in good condition are to be used. 6 Periodic, comprehensive inspections will be conducted to ensure each ladder is fit for use. Departments shall keep records of ladder inspections. Records must include dated inspection verification stickers applied directly to ladders. Unsafe ladders must be clearly marked or tagged as unsafe (e.g.: "Danger – Do Not Use"). The OHS Coordinator can help determine repair or disposal needs.

14. TRAINING & INSTRUCTION

Each employee that routinely uses ladders at ABC Company must receive initial training on the provisions in this policy prior to working with ladders that includes the following:

- A summary of the requirements in this policy and general equipment safety.
- Orientation to the ladders that are available to an individual for tasks required for their job.
- Physical hazards associated with ladder use in the workplace.
- Proper use and safety procedures to protect against accidents, including placement and orientation of ladders.
- Inspection procedures and record keeping.
- Resources for answers to use, maintenance, and safety questions

Training may be performed by individual departments or can be arranged by contacting the OHS department.

15. CONTRACTORS

Training of temporary or contracted employees is a joint responsibility of the contract employer and ABC Company. The contract employer must provide general training, and ABC

Company must inform the employee of specific hazards.

16. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed, in consultation with the Safety Committee or Safety Representative, at least once every 3 years and more often in response to fall incidents, injuries, illnesses, and changes affecting workers' health and safety.