

Worksite: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic C008: Ladders

**Introduction:** Ladders are an important and versatile piece of equipment commonly seen around the workplace. Although a ladder seems simple enough to use, unsafe ladder practices can lead to serious injuries. Falls are the primary hazard involving ladder use.

**A fall from a ladder can result from a number of reasons:**

**Ladder failure** from overloading or damage to the ladder.

**Employees can slip** or lose their balance while climbing.

**Over-reaching** while working on top of a ladder.

**Weather conditions** can affect safety when ladders are used outside.

**Slippery substances** such as grease or oil on rungs can cause slips and falls.

**If a ladder** is not set up properly, it can shift causing the person on the ladder to fall.

**Unprotected ladders** set up in opening doorways or high traffic zones can be bumped into or knocked over causing a fall.

**A falling object** from workers carrying too many tools or material up a ladder.

**Observe these guidelines and regulations:**

**Always inspect** any ladder for damage or defect prior to use. If upon inspection, faulty or defective components are discovered, the ladder must be immediately tagged and removed from service. The ladder may not be returned to service until repairs equal to original manufacturer's specifications are made.

**Use only ladders** meeting length and load limit requirements for the given application.

**Never use** metal ladders near electrical lines, equipment, or switch gear. Electric arc welding must not be done from a metal ladder.

**Always set up** ladders on stable solid surfaces. Never place ladders on boxes, blocks, or crates to extend reach.

**Never stand** on the 4 top rungs of a straight or extension ladder, or on the top 2 steps of a step ladder.

**Hoist tools** and other material up after reaching the top of the ladder. Using tool belts helps to manage tools while working from a ladder.

**Never over-reach** while working from a ladder. Descend and re-position ladder as needed to stay close to work.

**Rungs or steps** on metal ladders must be treated to prevent slipping. Treatment may include being corrugated, dimpled, knurled, or coated with non-skid, slip-resistant material.

**Ladder side rails** must extend 3 feet above the top landing. If this is not feasible due to the ladder's length, then the ladder must be securely tied off at the top to a non-moveable support, and grab rails must be provided for access.

**Never tie** different ladders together to make them longer unless specifically designed for this purpose.

**Ladders must** not be shifted, repositioned or extended while being used.

**When traveling** up or down ladders, always observe safe ladder techniques. Always face the ladder, using a three point climbing technique - with both feet and one hand, or both hands and one foot in contact with the ladder at all times. Never carry loads or objects that could cause you to lose your balance and fall.

**Conclusion:** OSHA regulations require specific ladder safety training. Employees who use ladders must be taught to recognize hazards relating to ladder use. Employees must understand the proper construction, appropriate selection, load limits, placement, care, and other restrictions in ladder handling. All employees must also understand OSHA requirements and be retrained as necessary to maintain their understanding of safe ladder practices.

Falls are the primary safety hazard regarding the use of ladders. Avoid a potential injury by inspecting the ladder before use, recognizing and addressing hazards in your work area that could affect your safety on the ladder, and by following safety guidelines while performing work using a ladder.

**Employee Attendance:** (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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*These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.*