



SAFETY CORNER



SAFETY DISCUSSION

Ladder Safety



According to OSHA Falls are the leading cause of death in construction. Every year falls from ladders make up **nearly a third of those deaths** which are preventable. In addition, ladders are consistently listed as one of the top 10 OSHA job site violations. Common safety guidelines are listed below.

All Ladders

- Always inspect your ladder prior to use
- Use an appropriate size ladder for both location and load
- Use the correct style of ladder for the application
- Always have three points of contact when on a ladder
 - Two hands, one foot
 - Two feet, one hand
 - Two feet and your knees
- Keep your belt buckle inside the side rails of the ladder
- Always face the ladder while ascending and descending the ladder
- Keep a 36" area around the base of the ladder, clear of debris, tools, and/or materials
- Always set ladders up on firm/level surfaces
- Only non-conductive ladders shall be used

Straight Ladder Safety (in addition to the above)

- Straight or extension ladders should extend 3' above the point of access (roof, upper level, or ground if using a ladder in an excavation)
- Straight ladders should be set at a 4:1 ratio
 - The distance from the vertical support should be 1/4 the distance to the point the ladder is supported
 - If you place your feet at the bottom of the ladder and extend both arms, you should be able to grab the rungs of the ladder w/o having to lean forward or backward.
- You may not stand or climb any higher than the third step from the top of the ladder

A-Frame Ladder Safety (in addition to the above)

- A-Frame ladders should be used in the open and locked position only
- You may not stand or climb any higher than the second step from the top of the ladder

Lean-Safe Step Ladder Safety (in addition to the above)

- When used as a straight ladder, the rung latch must be engaged (graphic 1 below)
- When used as a straight ladder a 4:1 ratio must be used to keep the non-marring, non-adjustable foot pads flat to the ground/surface (graphic 2 below)



Graphic 1



Graphic 2

Visit the OSHA website for a complete listing of ladder safety issues:
[OSHA Ladder Safety Website.](#)



Visit the Missouri PHCC Safety Corner on the Website to read current topics.

Visit the MO PHCC website

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