



LADDER SAFETY: **A HIDDEN HAZARD**

Recently, an injury to an employee occurred when the rung of the ladder being used broke, resulting in the employee falling to a concrete surface.

Could this incident have been prevented? Are there existing safety requirements that you need to know about? Are there specific OSHA requirements for ladders?

The answer to all of these questions is: **YES.**

For information about the OSHA standards, check out the General Industry Standards, 1910.25 Portable wood ladders. This Section is intended to prescribe rules and establish minimum requirements for the construction, care, and use of the common types of portable wood ladders, in order to insure safety under normal conditions of usage. The most important one you need to know and understand is paragraph (d), which deals with the care and use of ladders.

To insure safety and serviceability of ladders, here is a simple checklist derived from this paragraph:

NOTE: ALL OF THESE ITEMS ARE REQUIRED TO BE FOLLOWED.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | <u>ACTION NEEDED</u> |
|---|------------|-----------|----------------------|
| 1. Ladders maintained in good condition at all times. | | | |
| 2. Hardware & fittings securely attached. | | | |
| 3. Joints between rungs & side rails are tight. | | | |
| 4. Moveable parts operate freely. | | | |
| 5. Locks, wheels, pulleys, etc., lubricated frequently. | | | |
| 6. Frayed or badly worn ropes replaced. | | | |

- 7. Safety feet kept in good condition.
- 8. Ladders inspected frequently (prior to each use).

YES NO ACTION REQUIRED

- 9. Inspections documented and kept on file.
- 10. Defective ladders withdrawn from service.
- 11. Defective ladders repaired or destroyed.
- 12. Defective ladders marked “Dangerous, Do not use”.
- 13. Rungs kept free of grease and oil.
- 14. Ladders set at proper pitch when in use.
- 15. Not more than one person on the ladder.
- 16. Secure footing provided when in use.
- 17. Ladders not spliced together.
- 18. Ladders with broken, damaged, or missing parts not used.
- 19. Ladders provided with non-slip bases, when needed.

With these few simple precautions, falls from ladders may be minimized and your employees will be provided with the safest ladders for ordinary use. However, no ladder safety program will be effective unless all employees understand and follow these basic rules. It is easy to replace a defective ladder. The cost of an employee injury could buy 100 ladders!

For additional information contact risk management services at **1- 800-228-0986** and select “**safety and risk control**” from the available options.

This Bulletin is intended to assist in minimizing potential exposure to financial loss and is not intended to insure compliance with federal, state or local laws, regulations or rules, nor is it intended to be a substitute for legal counsel, actuarial assistance or other professional services. By offering periodic information on safety or risk management topics, neither the League nor its sponsored risk pools undertake to assume or guarantee safety or risk from injury or loss.