

ACC Buildings and Grounds

Safe Operating Procedure

LADDER SAFETY

The main hazard associated with the use of ladders is falls. Falls occur for a number of reasons, including the following:

The ladder is in poor condition.

The ladder is poorly located and incorrectly positioned.

The surface on which the ladder is located is dirty, greasy, or uneven.

The employee does not use proper techniques for working on the ladder.

Follow these tips for working safely with ladders:

- Inspect the ladder for deterioration or damage before each use.
- Keep ladders and step stools in good condition and use them in the manner for which they were designed. Do not cover wooden ladders with paint as this can hide structural defects.
- Make sure the ladder is tall enough to safely access the working space.
- Position the ladder correctly so that it is balanced when performing the task.
- Do not use portable metal ladders for electrical work, near live electrical parts, or within ten feet of high voltage electrical lines. (Increase the distance for very high voltage).
- Make sure the area is clear at the top and the bottom of the ladder.
- Place the ladder firmly on dry ground or flooring, so it won't slip or sink. Never place a ladder on boxes or other unstable bases.
- Don't set the ladder where it can be bumped (for example, a doorway, passageway, or driveway). If the ladder must be placed where it can be struck or displaced, place barricades around the area or have someone stand watch.
- Tie, block, and otherwise secure portable ladders.
- Place the base of portable ladders 1 foot out from the wall for every 4 feet of height to the point of support. (75° pitch).
- Do not stand or work on the top three rungs of a ladder that has no handholds unless the structure provides a firm handhold or fall protection equipment is used.
- Face the ladder while climbing and descending.
- Do not lean sideways out of the ladder's width (for example when working on a ladder do not lean so far that the naval passes outside of the ladder's side rails).
- Open stepladders fully.
- Do not stand on the top (cap) of a stepladder or on the step below the cap.
- Do not place planks on the top (cap) of a stepladder.
- Never exceed the load limits of the ladder.

- Climb ladders one person at a time unless the ladder is specially designed for more people.
- Do not use ladders as guys, braces, skids, gin poles, or for other than their intended purpose.
- Adjust extension ladders only when standing at the base, not while on or above the ladder.
- Place extension ladders so that side rails extend at least 3 feet above the landing or level they serve.
- Use a tool belt or a rope tied to a tool bucket. Do not carry tools, equipment, or materials while ascending or descending the ladder.
- Fall protection is required for the following situations: when working above six feet, when using the top three rungs of the ladder, or when the work activity does not allow for three points of body contact at all times.
 - Inspect the ladder before each use. If damaged, remove the ladder from service, tag it out of service and notify a supervisor.