



ARCO SAFE TOOL BOX TALKS

Ladders & Stairways - Ladders



Ladders Safety should not be taken lightly. Ladder problems are easy for OSHA inspectors to spot and result in numerous citations each year. Most importantly falls from ladders can be very serious, and in extreme cases fatal.

OSHA's most citable standards include:

- Side rails of ladder must extend at least 3' above the walking/working surface
- Stairway or ladder must be provided when a worker access point has a break in elevation of 19" or more and no ramp, runway, sloped embankment, etc. is provided
- Employers must provide a ladder training program which will ensure that you can recognize hazards related to ladders, and know how to minimize these hazards
- Ladders that have any defects must be taken out of service and "tagged out" to ensure that no other workers use them
- The top and top step of a step ladder must never be used as a step

OSHA's main 2 concentrations pertaining to ladders are:

Ladder Use:

- Ladders must be placed on stable and level surfaces unless tied off to prevent accidental movement
- Ladders must never be tied or fastened together to make them longer
- Ladders must never be moved, shifted, or extended while being used
- When ascending and descending a ladder you must (1) face the ladder, (2) use at least one hand to grasp the ladder, and (3) never carry objects/loads that could cause you to lose your balance and fall

Ladder Condition:

- To help prevent slipping, rungs and steps of metal ladders must be treated (corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid resistance)
- Ladders must be free of oil, grease, and other slip hazards
- Ladders must be inspected by a competent person for visible defects periodically, and after any occurrence affecting their safe use

Reference:

OSHA 1926.1050

Subpart X: Stairways and Ladders

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