

SAFETY NOTES

LADDER SAFETY

These rules specify when employers must provide stairways and ladders.

In general, the standards require the following:

- When there is a break in elevation of 19 inches (48 cm) or more and no ramp, runway, embankment or personnel hoist is available, employers must provide a stairway or ladder at all worker points of access.
- When there is only one point of access between levels, employers must keep it clear of obstacles to permit free passage by workers. If free passage becomes restricted, employers must provide a second point of access and ensure that workers use it.
- When there are more than two points of access between levels, employers must ensure that at least one point of access remains clear. In addition, employers must install all stairway and ladder fall protection systems required by these rules and ensure that their worksite meets all requirements of the stairway and ladder rules before employees use stairways or ladders.

LADDER HAZARDS

- Ladders with missing or broken parts.
- Using a ladder with too low a weight rating.
- Using a ladder that is too short for purpose.
- Using metal ladders near energized electrical equipment.

LADDER INSPECTION (Inspect before each use)

- Look for manufacturer's instruction label.
- Check the ladder's recommended weight limit and applications.
- Check for heat damage and corrosion.
- Make sure all rungs and steps are free of oil, grease, dirt, etc.
- Look for cracks on side rails, loose rungs, rails or braces.
- Look for damaged connections between rungs and rails.
- Check for bent or damaged spreaders.
- Check metal ladders for burrs and sharp edges.
- Check fiberglass ladders for signs of deterioration.

Ladders that have developed defects shall be withdrawn from service for repair or destruction and tagged as "Dangerous, Do Not Use."

Employers must train all employees to recognize hazards related to ladders and stairways, and instruct them to minimize these hazards.

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ZERO IS POSSIBLE

City of Houston Safety Program