



Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Training

Safety Services Company-Safety Meeting Division, PO Box 6408 Yuma, AZ 85366-6408 Toll Free (866) 204-4786



Company Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 227: Step Ladder Safety

Introduction: OSHA defines a step ladder as a self-supporting portable ladder, non-adjustable in length that has flat steps and a hinged back. Length is measured along the front edge of a side rail. Standard step-ladders should be used only on surfaces that offer firm, level footing such as floors, platforms, and slabs. Step-ladders are available in metal, wood, or reinforced fiberglass versions, and are intended to support only one worker at a time. Remember not to stand on, or work from, the top step. The ladders must have a metal spreader or locking arms and they can not be longer than 20 feet, measured along the front edge of the side rails. Step-ladders are easier and safer to use when you match them with the appropriate task. Still, most portable-ladder accidents happen when workers do one or more of the following: fail to inspect ladders regularly, place ladders inappropriately, or ignore safe practices when climbing or descending.



When using a step-ladder, always observe these ladder safety guidelines:

- **Select** the appropriate ladder for your task or job and place the ladder close to the work you are doing.
- **Inspect** the ladder before you use it. Make sure it is in sound condition — clean and undamaged.
- **Protect** an occupied ladder if it could be struck by vehicles or pedestrians. Never place a ladder in front of an unlocked, unguarded door.
- **Do not set** a ladder up on boxes, tables, trucks, or other moveable objects. Keep the area around the top and bottom of a ladder free of debris.
- **Avoid carrying** awkward loads when ascending or descending a ladder or placing tools or materials on a ladder if they could fall off.
- **Raise and lower** heavy, awkward loads with a hand line or hoist. Attach light, compact tools or materials to the ladder or to yourself.
- **Never climb** ladders when your hands or shoes are slippery.
- **When ascending** or descending ladders, always observe the 3 – point climbing rule: Keep two hands and one foot or one hand and two feet on the ladder at all times.
- **Never use** a metal ladder with conductive side rails near exposed, energized equipment. Such ladders must be permanently, legibly marked with the words: **“WARNING — Do Not Use Around Energized Electrical Equipment.”**
- **Make sure** only one person stands on, or works from, a standard ladder. (Use a second ladder if two or more people are doing the same task.)
- **Immediately inspect** any ladder that has collapsed, tipped over, or been exposed to oil or grease. Clean and repair the ladder if necessary.
- **Remove defective ladders** from service. Tag or mark defective ladders with the words: **“Dangerous, Do Not Use.”**
- **Keep the load** on the ladder (including yourself) below its maximum load capacity.
- **Do not paint** ladders because paint conceals defects. Use transparent preservatives instead.
- **Never use** ladders with broken, patched, oily, or cracked rails, rungs, or steps.
- **Exercise caution** while on a ladder; do not reach out over the side rails, lean, or turn excessively on a ladder.
- **Avoid using** a self-supporting ladder without first opening it up and securing the metal spreader or locking device.
- **When carrying** a ladder, keep the front end elevated, especially around blind corners, in aisles, and through doorways.



Ladder training — Employers have a responsibility to ensure that their employees understand how to inspect and use ladders correctly. A training program must be provided which enables each employee who uses a ladder to recognize and minimize ladder hazards. When applicable, a competent person must train each employee in the following areas:

- The nature of fall hazards in the work area
- The maximum load-carrying capacities of ladders used
- How to correctly use, place, handle, and maintain ladders
- OSHA requirements for the types of ladders that will be used

Conclusion: Begin your work with a ladder that will not let you down. Neglected ladders quickly become unsafe ladders. Step bolts slacken, step sockets and other joints work loose, hole sizes increase — eventually the ladder becomes twisted and unstable. Maintenance includes regular inspection of the ladder, repairing damage, and tightening step bolts and other fastenings. Periodic maintenance extends a ladder’s life and saves replacement costs.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Material Safety Data Sheets Reviewed: _____ (Name of Chemical)

Employee Signatures:

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

Foreman/Supervisor’s Signature:

These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.