Toolbox Talk Training: Ladder Safety – More Accident Prevention Tips for Working On Portable Step Ladders

This toolbox talk reviews additional ladder safety points for portable step ladders. Fall hazards are present whenever a ladder is used. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and labels, your employer's rules, and the OSHA requirements below.

Use the right ladder for the job

Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to gain extra height (29 CFR 1910.23(c)(13)). Do not tie or fasten ladders together to make a longer ladder unless they are specifically designed for that use (1910.23(c)(12); 1926.1053(a)(7)). If the ladder is not tall enough for the job, stop and get a ladder of the right size.

Use the ladder for its designed purpose

Ladders must be used only for the purposes for which they were designed (1910.23(b)(8); 1926.1053(b)(4)). Do not lay a ladder flat to use as a platform, plank, or walkway unless it is designed for that purpose.

Follow top step and rear climbing limits

The cap (if equipped) and top step of a stepladder must not be used as steps (1910.23(c)(8); 1926.1053(b)(13)). In construction, the rear cross-bracing of a stepladder must not be used for climbing unless the ladder is designed and provided with steps for climbing on both front and rear sections (1926.1053(b)(14)). Follow the manufacturer's labels for how each ladder may be used.

Face the ladder when climbing

Face the ladder when climbing up or down it (1910.23(b)(11); 1926.1053(b)(20)). Do not carry any object or load that could cause you to lose balance and fall while climbing (1910.23(b)(13); 1926.1053(b)(22)).

Consider whether a ladder is the right equipment

A ladder is not the right equipment for every job. If the task needs a stable work platform, ask your supervisor about scaffolding, an aerial lift, or other equipment designed and rated for the task.

Does anyone have questions or experiences to share about this topic? Thank you for participating. Please sign the sign-in form before leaving so your attendance is recorded. Signatures record attendance only, not certification or completion of required training.

General safety information only. This material does not replace required training, a site-specific hazard assessment, or professional safety advice. Before using it, verify current requirements with OSHA (osha.gov) and your employer. Follow applicable regulations, equipment manufacturers' instructions, and your employer's safety procedures.

Sources: OSHA 29 CFR 1910.23 (b)(8), (b)(11), (b)(13), (c)(8), (c)(12), (c)(13); 1926.1053 (a)(7), (b)(4), (b)(13), (b)(14), (b)(20), (b)(22). Cited paragraphs only. Discussion aid.

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TOOLBOX TALK TRAINING SIGN-IN FORM

Topic discussed: Ladder Safety - More Accident Prevention Tips for Working On Portable Step Ladders

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Discussion led by:_____

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