

Guidance Note

Ladder use

Introduction

Inappropriate or incorrect use of Ladders claims 14 deaths and 1200 major injuries every year. Simple measures can prevent or reduce the risk of major injuries and deaths, such measures are:

- Use ladders and stepladders for short durations (30 Mins max)
- Prepare a Risk assessment for the task
- Inspect the ladder, making sure it is in a good state of repair.

Who's Responsible?

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure staff are adequately trained in the safe use of ladders and to make sure all equipment is in a sound state of repair. Furthermore, it's the responsibility of the employee to inspect and report any defects to the ladders.

Good Practice

- Enforce internal pre-user checks, which will be carried out before the ladder / stepladder is used.
- Three monthly management inspections of steps and ladders
- Prepare a ladder register which records
 - Make / Type
 - Duty / Weight /
 - Date first put in use
 - Previous inspection findings
- Provide Ladder / working at height training for all ladder users

Using Steps and Ladders

Tips for the safe use of ladders and stepladders include:

- When erecting the ladder, make sure you follow the angle indicator on the stales of some ladders, if your ladder does not have this refer to the 1in4 rule (75⁰ angle)
- When setting up the ladder ensure the ladder is not resting on weak surfaces such as plastic, or glass,
- Make sure the ladder is on a firm, level, clean solid surface; be aware of shiny surfaces as they can be slippery even with out contamination
- Where possible secure the bottom, and tie the top and / or the middle of the ladder to prevent it slipping, other methods of preventing the ladder from slipping include securely wedging a ladder e.g. against a wall, and footing the ladder, footing will require two operatives and should always be the last resort.
- Always keep three points of contact (hands and feet) on the working position
- Do not step on the top three rungs of the ladder
- Avoid over reaching. Reposition the ladder instead

Further Advice

For further advice and guidance please contact the Education Health and Safety team on:

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