

SAFEGUARDS

Information

LADDERS

OBJECTIVE

To provide guidelines on the safe use of portable ladders.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986* requires employers to provide a safe work environment, safe systems of work, and ensure that plant is maintained in a safe condition.

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Regulation 2.13(10) details the safety requirement for the use of ladders.

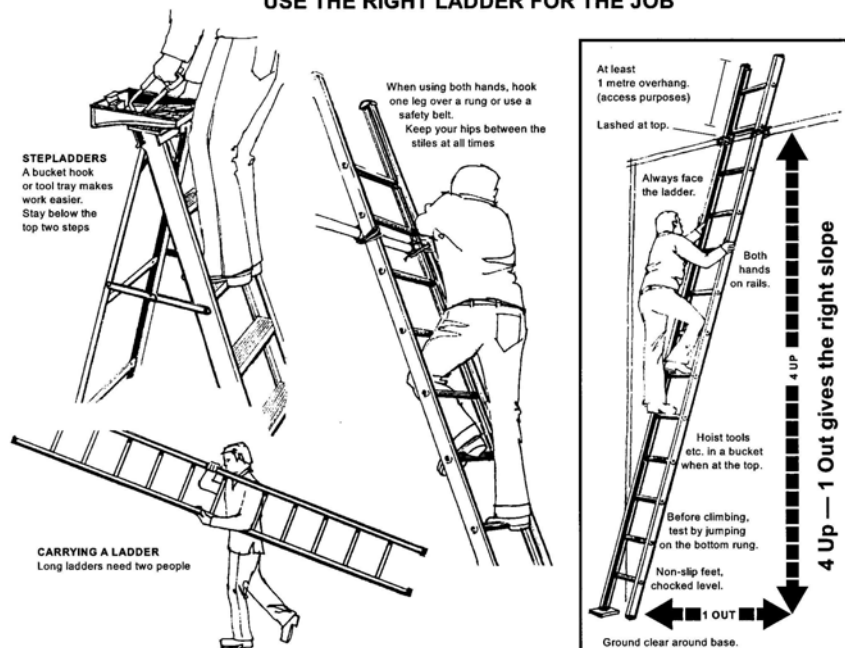
RISK CONTROL MEASURES

Ladders are generally considered high-risk plant and should only be used if there is no other reasonably practicable alternative, such as scaffolding or an elevating work platform.

If you must use a ladder, before you start work:

- conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment
- install a barricade or warning signs if there is a hazard to persons in proximity of the work area
- ensure that the ladder has an angle or pitch of about 1:4
- ensure that the ladder extends at least one metre above the landing
- ensure that the ladder is installed on a firm footing
- secure the top and bottom of the ladder against displacement
- ensure that a non-conductive, insulated ladder is used for electrical work or near electrical hazards
- ensure that the ladder will not be used in a manner that endangers any person.

USE THE RIGHT LADDER FOR THE JOB



Working on a ladder

Only one person should be on a ladder at any one time.

When ascending or descending the ladder, maintain three points of contact. For example, two feet and one hand or two hands and one foot must be in contact with the ladder at all times.

Keep your body centred between the ladder stiles.

Do not stand above the tread or rung on the ladder indicated as the maximum safe working height.

Only conduct light work from a ladder.

If the ladder is placed near a doorway, the door should be locked open or closed. Alternatively, a person may be placed on guard at the foot of the ladder. Warning signs may also be used.

Step or Trestle Ladders

Step or trestle ladders should only be used in the fully open position. A rigid metal spreader or locking device must be used and the load must be carried by the front stiles.

Inspections and Maintenance

Ladders should be checked frequently and periodically serviced by a competent person (someone who is qualified either through experience, training or both).

Consideration should be given to the type of environment in which the ladder has been used. For example, aluminium ladders can easily become damaged if exposed to acids.

Duty Rating

Ladders intended for industrial or heavy use must have a load rating of 120kg or greater.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Australian Standards

AS 1892.5 Portable Ladders – selection, safe use and care

Australian Standards

Standards can be purchased from SAI-Global

Tel 131 242

Website www.saiglobal.com

SafeWork SA Publications

Fall and Prevention in Construction

⇒ Reports Part 1, 2 & 3

Working at Heights Booklet

SafeWork SA

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Country Offices

Berri, Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie and Whyalla

Help and Early Intervention Centre

Library and Bookshop

100 Waymouth Street, Adelaide

Telephone 1300 365 255

(If calling from a mobile phone or from interstate tel. (08) 8303 0400)

Website www.safework.sa.gov.au

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