



CIRSA HAZARD ALERT

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SAFER TOGETHER

Hazard Alert – Ladder Safety



According to the World Health Organization, the United States leads the world in ladder deaths. Each year, there are more than 164,000 emergency room-treated injuries and 300 deaths in the U.S. that are caused by falls from ladders. Most ladder deaths are from falls of 10 feet or less.

Over the past decade, the number of people who have died from falls from ladders has tripled. Falls from ladders are the leading cause of ladder-related injuries, followed by using a ladder improperly, using a faulty or defective ladder, and simple carelessness.

Here are some recommendations to help you avoid ladder falls and injuries:

1. Establish standard operating procedures, such as a job safety analysis, for high-risk tasks that are infrequently performed.
2. Do not modify a ladder in a way which would void the manufacturer's warranty.
3. Implement a written ladder use, inspection, and maintenance program. Tag and remove unsafe ladders from use.
4. Supervisors should monitor ladder activities to help ensure the policies are being followed.

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Ladder Safety (cont.)

5. Train employees in safe ladder use practices. Follow all manufacturer's warnings and instructions for safe ladder use including:
- Select the correct type of ladder for the task.
 - Use a ladder which is designed for the load to be placed upon it.
 - Always face the ladder.
 - Don't climb a ladder with items in your hands.
 - Ensure the nonslip feet of the ladder are secure on the surface.
 - Fully open folding ladders and ensure the locks are in place.
 - Do not place a ladder in front of a door that is not locked, blocked or guarded.
 - If the working surface is uneven, use wood planking or another solid surface to create a solid base for the ladder.
 - Do not step on the top two steps of a step ladder or on the top three rungs of extension ladders.
 - Keep your waist below the ladder's top rung and your body centered inside the side rails.
 - Use extension/straight ladders at a 4:1 angle.
 - Extension/straight ladders, if extended beyond the point of resting, should extend three feet above the resting point and be secured at the top to prevent slipping.
 - Ensure the rungs of the ladder and your shoes/boots are clean and dry.
 - Use the correct fall restraint system if working on a raised platform above six feet high.

Resources:

<https://www.nachi.org/ladder-safety.htm>