

# Safety Talks



## LADDERS – STEP UP TO SAFETY

Ladder accidents are common even though they are entirely preventable. Practice these safe working habits to prevent falls:

### DO:

- Train employees in appropriate and safe use of ladders.
- Read and follow all labels on the ladder.
- Inspect the ladder before each use. Look for missing, damaged or loose components.
- Clean wet or slippery rungs before using the ladder.
- Ask for help when moving or setting up heavy or awkward ladders.
- Use fiberglass ladders when working near electricity or overhead power lines.
- Fully open the stepladder and firmly lock both spreaders.
- Position the ladder so you can face your work and do not have to lean sideways.
- Be sure that all ladder feet are on firm, level ground.
- Maintain a 3-point contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) on the ladder when climbing.
- Ascend and descend facing the ladder.
- Keep your body centered within the ladder's side rails.
- Always move one step at a time, firmly setting one foot before moving the other.
- Select a ladder with the necessary height for the job.
- Be careful stepping onto and off of the ladder.
- Wear proper footwear with good tread when climbing.

### DON'T:

- Use a damaged ladder.
- Stand above the second step from the top of a stepladder.
- Climb a closed stepladder. It may slip out from under you.
- Place ladders on boxes, barrels, tables, or any other surface to obtain additional height.
- Place ladders in traffic areas, passageways, or in front of doorways that are not guarded.
- Carry heavy, bulky or awkward objects that make travel on a ladder difficult.
- Permit more than one person on a single-sided stepladder.
- Exceed the rated load capacity of the ladder. The load includes the weight of the person and any equipment, tools and materials.
- Over-reach, lean to one side, or try to move a ladder while on it. Climb down and then reposition the ladder closer to your work!
- Use a chair or a desk as a substitute for a stepladder regardless of the height of the task!



Safety Sam explains:



There are four primary causes of the majority of ladder accidents:

1. Selecting the wrong type of ladder
2. Using a worn or damaged ladder
3. Incorrect use of the ladder
4. Incorrect placement or setup of a ladder



Near-Miss Nancy reminds us to:

“Use a ladder when it is needed. Chairs, tables, boxes, or buckets are not substitutes for a ladder. If you can't reach it without standing on something, get a ladder.”

