



Construction Workplace Safety Training Ltd

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Training, Site Audits, Safety Policy and Programs, WSIB Claims Management

Ministry of Labour Position Paper on Ladder use in Construction.

There has been a lot of debate as to the use of ladders in construction. Many inspectors were issuing charges against workers and employers while in another region there were no charges being laid.

Employers and constructors have long looked for clarification of what constituted safe use of a ladder and where could they be used.

At one point in time, it was allowed for work that was “short duration in nature”. This still led to a great deal of confusion.

Falls from ladders continue to be the largest single incident causing injury in Ontario. Most of these are from improper use of the ladder.

To that end, the Ministry published it’s position on ladder use in construction on January 3rd , 2012.

It should be noted that there has been no change in legislation with respect to ladder use.

OHSA 213/91 sect. 26. Is the specific legislation that applies to working at heights including ladders. As well as sect. 78-84, 240 and 286

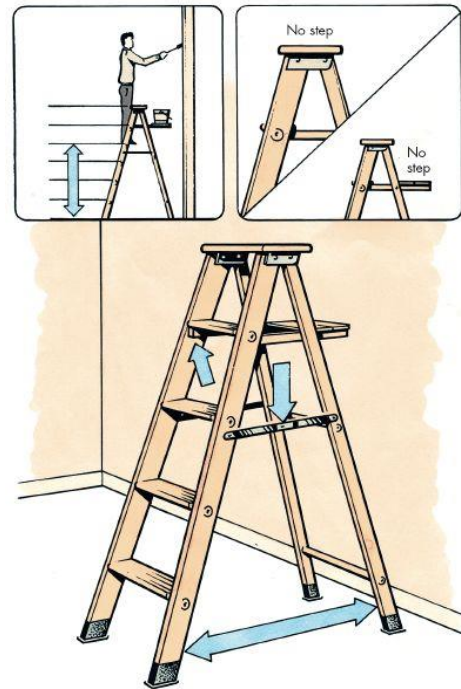
Ladder Use in Construction

The first point to be noted is that the Ministry has placed the decision to use a ladder squarely on the shoulders of the employer.

This means that the first point in any investigation will be directed towards the employer in the event of an incident.

When choosing to use a ladder for any task, the following points **MUST** be considered.

- Is a ladder the safest piece of equipment to use in this case?
- This decision **CANNOT** be based on ease or speed of production.
- A ladder used for access and egress is fine, however it must be secured at top and bottom.
- Any work over 3 metres, fall protection must be used.
- Is the ladder CSA approved and rated for the task?
- Can the worker attain 3 point contact when required? (3 point contact must be continuous while ascending or descending the ladder)
- Are the workers properly trained in the use of ladders?
- Does the “**Site Specific Health and Safety Program**” address the hazards of using a ladder?
- Will the work being done adversely affect the stability of the ladder in any way?
- Has a **Site Specific Hazard Assessment** been completed and submitted to the supervisor?
- Where possible, it is recommended that a manufacturer's ladder stabilizers be used.
- A ladder with a built in work platform, built in accordance with CSA Standard CAN3-Z11 is preferred over a standard extension ladder.
- Grade 1 ladders are the preferred ladders to be used on a construction site, and only in accordance with the manufacturer's specs.
- To be clear, where an employer intends to allow the use of a ladder for any work, the preferred method is to use a scaffold as per section 125(1). If however the assessment determines there is NO RISK, or all hazards identified have been mitigated. The **EMPLOYER** shall ensure that the ladder and its usage comply with the regulations and that **ALL** precautions for the protection of the worker have been taken.



Use of a Ladder

The primary use of a ladder in construction can be divided into 3 main categories;

1. Climbing or descending
2. Receiving/placing/removing tools and materials
3. Working from a ladder

Depending on the type of work being carried out, the risk assessment will have to account for all possibilities.

Documentation of training, competency, and intended use will all factor into the assessment.

Note that training is not necessarily a formal classroom training but may simply be a review of safe procedures by such means as a "Tool Box Talk". Documentation is still critical.



Risk Assessment Checklist

Job Location _____ Name _____ Date _____

Equipment:

Y N N/A

1. Can scaffold or other equipment be used in the application
2. Is the ladder suitable (type and grade etc.)
3. Is the ladder in good repair
4. Can it be secured top and bottom (extension ladder)
5. Will the ladder extend 3 rungs above the top contact point
6. Can it be positioned so the worker works without overreaching
7. Is there no danger of electrical contact
8. Is the work zone secure from possible impact from equipment etc.
9. Is there a firm level surface to set up the ladder
10. Will accessories be required such as stabilizers

Worker:

1. Is the worker properly trained
2. The tasks do not put sudden and undo force on the ladder
3. (e.g. using hammer drills, pulling cable or rope etc.)
4. Must maintain 3 point contact while climbing or descending
5. Faces the ladder when climbing or working
6. Does not over reach sideways or below the knees or backwards
7. to receive materials or tools or place materials
8. Always stands with both feet on the ladder
9. Works keeping his/her centre of gravity between the side rails
10. Can attain 3 point contact when required, while working
11. Wears fall protection equipment when working over 3 metres
12. Has reviewed company policy on ladder use

Supervisor:

1. Has communicated the rules and regulations to the worker
2. Has mitigated all risks associated with use of the ladder
3. Has inspected the equipment weekly
4. Has ensured proper training was provided to the workers
5. Has ensured all proper procedures are being followed
6. Has taken every precaution reasonable to protect the workers
7. Has documented all of the above

Employer:

- Has a safety policy regarding ladder use (employs 6 or more workers)
- Ensures workers are adequately trained
- Appoints a competent supervisor
- Has taken every precaution reasonable to protect the worker

Risk Chart:

	A	B	C	D
1	Critical	Critical	Critical	Moderate
2	Critical	Serious	Moderate	Minor
3	Serious	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
4	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Severity:

1. Fatality or Permanent Disability
2. Lost Time Injury
3. Reportable Injury
4. Minor Injury

Probability:

- A. Likely
- B. Probable
- C. Possible
- D. Unlikely

Risk of using ladder for the task of _____, is _____ (e.g. C3).

Steps taken to prevent injury or incident;

Supervisor:

Worker:

Date:

If you would like a complete copy of the Position Paper, please go to our website

www.buildwithsafety.com