

SAFETY OPERATING PROCEDURE

Ladder Safety

- Only use ladders to work at heights when it is not practical to use higher order control measures.
- Ladders should only be used for low-risk, short-duration work.
- Make sure the chosen ladder is appropriate to the task. The ladder must be industrially rated with a load capacity of > 120 kg.
- Always maintain three points of contact with the ladder at any one time.



POTENTIAL HAZARDS

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| ■ Falls from height | ■ Falling objects | ■ Awkward posture | ■ During of task |
| ■ Repetition of movement | ■ Sprains/strains | ■ Pedestrians | ■ Electrocution |

PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY CHECKS

1. Always refer to the manufacturer's label for load ratings and other safety information. The rated capacity must be sufficient to accommodate the weight of the person and everything that they are carrying.
2. ALWAYS inspect the ladder before each use to ensure there are no worn parts or damage before climbing:
 - joints between steps and side rails is tight, all fittings/rivets are secure, moving parts operate freely
 - rungs are free of mud, paint splatter, oil and grease, welds are intact
 - all components of ladder intact including side rails, steps, rungs, and feet are in sound condition
 - side rails and rungs are free of excessive denting or other signs of wear.
3. Keep any auxiliary equipment in good condition at all times e.g. levellers, anchor points, wall plates, platforms. If any component is found to be worn or damaged, immediately remove the ladder from service, label it as 'out-of-service' and notify the appropriate supervisor. Rectify any faults before use.

PRE-START SAFETY CHECKS

1. Choose the right ladder for the job.
2. Ensure the ladder is the proper height. The top step and next two rungs down on a ladder are not intended for climbing. Three rungs must extend above the roof if using an extension ladder. Do not improvise to gain additional height.
3. Wear slip-resistant, closed-toe, sturdy footwear. Never wear sandals, high heels or flip-flops. Wear appropriate clothing e.g. no loose or flapping clothing and ensure clothing does not restrict movement when climbing.
4. Inspect the area to ensure there are no surface, aerial or nearby hazards.
5. Do not work at heights if affected by a medical condition or medication.
6. When transporting your ladder, check for overhead power lines, live wires, service cabling, electrical fittings e.g. ceiling fans or electrical hazards. Use two people to carry and erect long or heavy ladders.

START-UP SAFETY CHECKS

1. Ensure the ladder is placed on dry, firm, level surface and not subject to skidding or slipping. Position the ladder until all feet have firm contact with the floor. Always check there is no rocking movement before climbing the ladder. Do not use blocks, rocks, boxes or other items to 'level up' or gain height. Use an approved ladder leveller.
2. If castors are fitted to the ladder, ensure rubber feet have firm contact with the floor when the springs are depressed.
3. Do not position a ladder in an area where it can be bumped or dislodged e.g. doorway, passage way, window opening). If a ladder needs to be located where it can be struck or displaced, secure the area by locking doors, placing barricades or using another appropriate action.
4. Do not use a ladder in strong winds, heavy weather or when visibility is poor e.g. poorly lit areas.
5. Ensure the ladder is fully opened before climbing. Always face towards the ladder when climbing, and always maintain three points of contact with the ladder. Tool bags or tool belts can help to keep hands free.
6. Only one person is permitted on the ladder at any time. A second person may stand alongside the ladder and help to steady it, or pass materials/tools up if required. Do not lift heavy weights that unbalance the ladder.
7. Maintain a safe, balanced stance while on the ladder. Do not over reach whilst using the ladder. Always get off to shift position – never 'walk' the ladder whilst on it.
8. Always maintain the majority of your body weight inside the perimeter of the work platform or ladder stiles.

HOUSEKEEPING

- Return ladders to secure storage in a clean and in safe working order.
- Enter any maintenance in an equipment maintenance record.

Date of last review:

Signature:

Each workplace must develop their own SOP suited to their environment, equipment, training and work task.

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