## LADDER SAFETY

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for selecting, using and maintaining ladders.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all Employees and Contractors.

STANDARDS / PROCEDURES

General

As per Ontario Regulation 851, s. 85 of the OHSA; Worker(s) exposed to the hazard of falling more than three (3) meters, must meet the requirements of the Working at Heights Procedure.

Access Ladders

As per Ont. Reg. 851, s.18 (1); An access ladder fixed in position shall:

* Be vertical;
* Have rest platforms at not more than nine metre intervals;
* Be offset at each rest platform;
* Where the ladder extends over five metres, above grade floor or landing, have a safety cage commencing not more than 2.2 metres above grade, floor or landing with opening to permit access by a worker to rest platforms or to the top landing;
* Have side rails that extend ninety centimetres above the landing; and,
* Have rungs which are at least fifteen centimetres from the wall and spaced at regular intervals.

As per Ont. Reg. 851, s. 18 (2), subsection (1) does not apply to an access ladder on a tower, water tank, chimney or similar structure which has a safety device which will provide protection should a worker using the ladder fall.

As per Ont. Reg. 851, s. 19; Where frequent access is required to equipment elevated above or located below floor level, permanent platforms shall be provided with access by a fixed:

1. Stair; or,
2. Access ladder.

Portable Ladders

As per Ont. Reg. 851, s. 73 of the OHSA; All portable ladders must meet the following requirements, at a minimum:

* Have non-slip feet;
* Be placed on a firm footing;
* Be free from broken or loose members or other faults;
* Be securely fastened, or held in place by one or more workers while being used if the ladder is likely to be endangered by traffic; and,
* When not securely fastened, be inclined so that the horizontal distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is not less than ¼ and not more than 1/3 of the length of the ladder.

Proper Use of Ladders

* Check the ladder for defects at the start of the shift, after it has been used in another location by other workers, or after it has been left in one location for a lengthy period of time;
* Areas surrounding the base and top of the ladder should be clear of trash, materials and other obstructions;
* The base of the ladder should be secured against accidental movement. Use a ladder equipped with non-slip feet appropriate for the situation;
* The ladder must be set up on a firm level surface, if its base is to rest on soft, un-compacted or rough soil, a mud sill should be used;
* The top of the ladder should be tied off or otherwise secured to prevent any movement. If this is not possible, given the type of ladder or circumstances of its use, one worker should hold the base of the ladder while it is being used;
* If a ladder is used for access from one work level to another, the side rails should extend a minimum of 900 millimeters (3 feet) above the landing;
* All straight or extension ladders should be erected at an angle such that the horizontal distance between the top support and the base is not less than one-quarter or greater than one-third the vertical distance between these points;
* Check all overhead areas for such things as power lines, etc.;
* Ladders should not be placed against flexible or moveable surfaces;
* Maintain 3-point contact when climbing up or down a ladder. That means two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand on the ladder at all times. This is especially important when you get on or off a ladder at heights;
* Whenever possible, avoid climbing up or down a ladder while carrying anything in your hands. Tools, equipment and materials should be placed in a container and raised and lowered by a rope, if necessary;
* Never straddle the space between a ladder and another object;
* Never erect ladders on boxes, carts, tables or other unstable surfaces; and,
* Never rest a ladder on its rungs, ladders must rest on their side rails only.

Maintenance and Inspection

* Ladders will be visually inspected daily / prior to use;
* Any ladder found to be defective shall be taken out of service and tagged; and,
* Once tagged, the ladder must not be used. The tag shall read “DO NOT USE”.

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