



Ladder Safety Talk

Ladders are an essential tool on many jobsites and at home across the United States. Because of their wide spread use and the inherent danger of working at heights, they are responsible for a large number of injuries both on and off the job. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports there are an average of 165,000 injuries at home every year and the COG reported there was over 50,000 injuries on the job resulting from ladders in 2011.

Ladder Injury Facts and Statistics

- In 2011, 113 workers died while using a ladder.
- 43% of **fatal falls** on the job from 2001 to 2011 involved a ladder.
- According to the BLS 50% of all ladder-related injuries occurred when the individual was climbing with objects in their hands.
- Fractures are the most common type of ladder-related injury.

Common Causes of Ladder Falls

1. Unsafe actions when using ladders— People often do not follow the safe work practices when using ladders. Standing on the top step of a ladder is a common and deadly practice. Other actions like climbing up a ladder carrying objects, leaning to reach for something, and attempting to move the ladder while still on it are some common practices that lead to injuries.
2. No inspection prior to use— Problems such as cracked or broken rungs, loose bolts, non-approved fixes, etc. lead to injuries.
3. Not using the correct ladder— People will often use the same ladder for many different jobs and situations. Choosing a ladder that is too short for the job is often a problem that leads to an injury. Also choosing a ladder not stable enough for the ground conditions or one that is not rated properly for the job are issues that can lead to injury.

Ladder Safe Work Practices

- Never stand on the top step if it is not designed to be a step.
- Do not lean or reach to grab something while on a ladder. Climb down and reposition the ladder closer to the object or area you were trying to reach.
- Do not carry objects up the ladder in your hands. Use a tool belt or a retrieval system to bring tools up to you once you have climbed the ladder. Always have your hands free when climbing so you are able to have three points of contact with the ladder.
- Always inspect a ladder before use. If there is any problems with it, immediately tag it out of use and find a properly functioning ladder.



- Use the correct ladder for the job. There are many types of ladders to work in different situations. Check weight ratings to ensure you do not overload the ladder during use.
- Always secure the ladder. Make sure the ladder is stable on the ground before climbing up. Tie off the ladder to the structure you are next to. Have someone hold the ladder to secure it.

Discussion point:

-Does anyone have a personal story about someone they know who was injured while using a ladder?