6 - Ladders: Safety Training

EH&S – MGA

Goals: This safety session should teach you to:
   A. Understand how to choose, inspect, and use ladders correctly.

OSHA Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.25-.27

1. Proper Ladder Selection, Inspection, and Use Can Prevent Falls and Injuries
   A. OSHA standards cover ladder design as well as requirements for:
      1. Inspecting ladders and removing unsafe ladders from use
      2. Safe ways to climb and work on ladders

2. Select the Right Ladder for the Job
   A. Use a ladder, not a chair or box, to reach heights. The ladder should be:
      1. Tall enough to reach the height you need
      2. Rated to handle the combined weight of you and your equipment.
         a. Ladders are rated I-A (holds 300 pounds); I (250 pounds); II (225 pounds); III
            (200 pounds. Not usually used on the job).
      3. Safe for the conditions.
         a. Don’t use metal ladders around electricity, because metal is a conductor.

3. Inspect Every Ladder Before Using It
   A. Don’t use a ladder that has any missing or broken parts.
      1. Tag it as defective and remove it from service.
      2. Don’t try to fix a ladder yourself.
   B. A ladder should have:
      1. No missing parts
      2. Firmly attached slip-resistant steps, rungs, or cleats free of grease or oil
      3. Tight support braces, bolts, screws, and spreaders
      4. Lubricated metal parts
      5. Safety feet.
      6. Rope in good condition (not worn or frayed)
      7. No splinters or sharp edges
      8. No dents or bent parts in metal ladders

4. Set Up a Ladder Firmly and Properly
   A. Place it on level floor or ground, with feet parallel to the surface it rests against.
   B. Place the ladder on wide boards if the ground is soft or broken.
   C. Extend the ladder at least three feet above the top support.
   D. Don’t rest it on a window or window sash or in front of an unlocked door.
   E. Anchor the top. Tie the bottom or have someone hold it.
   F. The distance from the ladder’s base to the wall should equal one-fourth the ladder’s length
5. Climb and Work on Ladders Safely
   A. Wear shoes with clean, nonskid, non-leather soles.
   B. Allow only one person at a time on a ladder.
   C. Climb up and down facing the ladder and holding both side rails.
   D. Carry tools on a belt or rope or hoist.
   E. Work with one hand on the ladder.
   F. Don’t stand on the top two stepladder steps or top four ladder rungs.
   G. Move slowly and cautiously on a ladder.
   H. Don’t move a ladder while you’re on it.
   I. Center your body on the ladder so your belt buckle is between the side rails.

6. Carry and Store Ladders Properly
   A. Carry a ladder with another person when possible.
      1. If you must carry alone, balance the center on your shoulder. Keep the front end above your head and the back end near the ground.
   B. Store ladders in a dry, ventilated area kept at a moderate temperature.
   C. Store ladders standing up, if possible.
      1. If they must lie down, support both ends and the middle to prevent sagging or warping.
   D. Don’t keep anything on a stored ladder, or the ladder will warp.

**Summation: Attention to Ladder Safety Prevents Injuries**

Take the time to choose, inspect, and use a ladder safely.