

## Ladder Safety



Ladder safety isn't just for Maintenance Technicians, for example stepladders are used in office environments, so this applies to everyone! Remember, ladders are tools and as such must be used with caution.

Falls from ladders can be as painful as a fall from a roof and about 1/3 of all reported falls are falls from ladders. Many of the fall related injuries result from the improper use or the use of a defective ladder.

### Inspecting Your Ladder for Defects

- Look for missing or loose cleats at the bottom
- Look for loose or missing screws, bolts, rungs
- Look for cracked, broken, split, dented or badly worn rungs
- Look for splinters on wood ladders
- Look for corrosion on metal ladders

*Do not use a ladder that has any of these defects.*

### Ladder Selection

- Select the right type and size of ladder for the job
- The Duty Rating of the ladder must be greater than the total weight of the user as well as the tools, supplies, etc. placed upon the ladder
- The length of the ladder must be sufficient so that the climber does not have to stand on the top rung

### Proper Ladder Use

- Make sure the ladder is set on level ground
- Do not overreach or lean to the side
- Always face the ladder and use both hands when climbing
- Ladders must not be placed in front of closed doors that can open toward the ladder unless the door is blocked open, locked, or guarded
- Keep the area at the bottom of the ladder clear of tool cords, tools, material and trash
- When using extension ladders, the 3 top rungs must extend beyond the landing platform
- Use both hands when climbing a ladder - do not carry tools or materials up the ladder
- If necessary to move material or tools up a ladder, first climb up, then pull up the work with a hand line
- Allow only 1 person on the ladder at a time
- If you feel dizzy, or are prone to losing your balance, stay off the ladder
- Do not use ladders in high winds or storms
- Wear clean slip-resistant shoes
- Take your time and do not use sudden movements or take your mind off the fact you are on a ladder

### The Three Point-of-Contact Climb

When climbing a ladder, it is safest to utilize the method known as "Three Points-of-Contact" since it minimizes the chances of slipping and falling off the ladder. At all times during ascent, descent, and while working, the climber must have contact with the ladder at 3 points – the points being your 2 hands and 2 feet. By using this method, you are much less likely to become unstable in the event one limb loses contact and slips.