

No job is more important.



Safety Alert

Nº.7 1998

# LADDER SAFETY

A number of avoidable incidents and accidents involving ladders occur each year that result in serious injuries. These incidents or accidents occur in a variety of workplaces such as shopping centres, retail stores and factories as well as in the building trades and maintenance industries. By adopting the following procedures, the personal suffering and financial loss resulting from an accident can be prevented.

## USE THE RIGHT LADDER FOR THE JOB

**STEPLADDERS**  
A bucket hook or tool tray makes work easier. Stay below the top two steps

When using both hands, hook one leg over a rung or use a safety belt. Keep your hips between the stiles at all times

**CARRYING A LADDER**  
Long ladders need two people

At least 1 metre overhang. (access purposes)

Lashed at top.

Always face the ladder.

Both hands on rails.

Hoist tools etc. in a bucket when at the top.

Before climbing, test by jumping on the bottom rung.

Non-slip feet, chocked level.

Ground clear around base.

**4 Up — 1 Out gives the right slope**

## Basic Rules

- Think about what you are planning to do.
- Prepare operating procedures for the safe use of all ladders.
- Provide training and supervision for everyone using ladders.
- Only use portable ladders to gain temporary access or when undertaking short duration tasks.
- Select the correct type and length of ladder for the task and make sure that it is used correctly — for example, a stepladder, portable ladder or trestle.
- Use industrial rated ladders of not less than 120 kg capacity in the workplace and comply with Australian Standard 1892 (*Portable Ladders*).
- Erect mobile platforms or scaffolds for heavy or lengthy work.

## Safety Rules

- Inspect the structural condition of the ladder before use. If you see any defects, take the ladder out of use.
- Make sure that the base is on a firm non-slip surface.
- Face the ladder to ascend and descend using both hands for support.
- Never use metal or timber ladders with wire reinforced styles near live electrical conductors or equipment.
- Place the ladder with a slope no greater than a ratio of *one out:four up*.
- Make sure that the top of the ladder is restrained (tied to support) or secured by a person holding the bottom until the work is completed.
- Make sure that the stepladder legs are fully spread before climbing.
- Stay below the top two steps on a stepladder.
- Brace your legs against the ladder for support.

Remember — the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* places responsibility on both employers and employees to implement and adhere to safe work procedures. Following safety procedures will prevent injury and reduce costs.

For further information phone the Workplace Standards Authority on  
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