

# Petroleum Oriented Safety Training Best Practices



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# Ladder Safety

The following recommendations or 'best-practices' have been gathered from various industry sources in an effort to assist front-line workers in minimizing the hazards associated with ladder-use.

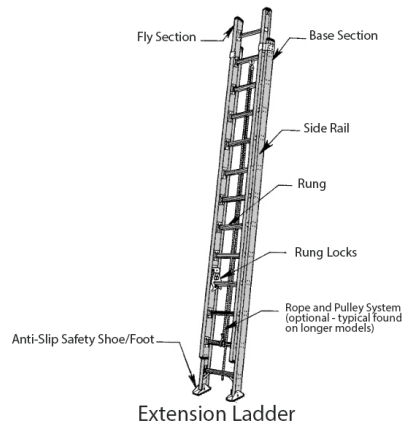
For the purposes of this document, the terms: 'ladder' or 'ladders' refers to 'portable' as opposed to 'fixed' devices (i.e. permanent roof-access ladders), and includes the following: Step Ladders; Platform Ladders; Extension Ladders and Step Stools.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ▲ Only ladders bearing the **CSA certification** label should be used; (this assures the ladder has been manufactured to a high standard by experts in ladder construction and use).

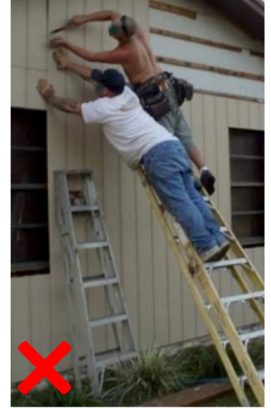


- ▲ Ladders should be **inspected prior to, and after every use**; defects should be **reported**, and the ladder should be **tagged** and taken **out-of-service**. (diagrams below show components of a Step and Extension Ladder to assist with inspections)



- ▲ When working near electrical services or equipment, Fiberglass (**non-conductive**) ladders should be used.
- ▲ Ladders should only be used on a **Firm, Level, Non-Slip surface free of material and debris**.
- ▲ Workers should **keep their boots free of mud, snow, grease or other slippery materials**.
- ▲ When using extension ladders, workers should maintain the **proper setup angle - 1 meter out for every 4 meters up (1:4 ratio)**. Extension sections should **overlap by at least 4 rungs**, and when accessing an elevated work location, the **top of the ladder should extend at least 1 metre (3 rungs) above the elevated work location** and should be firmly secured at the top and bottom to prevent movement.

- ▲ Workers should never **'lean or reach to one side'** - causing their center-of-gravity to affect the stability of the ladder - it is better to descend, relocate the ladder then re-ascend. The photo on the right is an example of what **not** to do. Not to mention, there should only be one person at a time on a ladder.



- ▲ Workers should always maintain **3-points of contact**.

- ▲ Workers should **avoid excessive pulling or pushing** while on a ladder - this could include the use of certain types of equipment which require using a lot of force to operate (i.e. hammer-drill).

- ▲ Workers should have **2 feet on the rungs at all times** while working, (this does not pertain to ascending and descending).

- ▲ Ladders should only be used as means of 'access' and 'egress', as opposed to 'work-platforms'. If a ladder *is* to be used as a work-platform, the employer should ensure adequate hazard identifications are performed, and be willing to provide a **2<sup>nd</sup> worker (spotter)**, to not only maintain stability of the ladder but also assist the worker who is performing the work. If the 2<sup>nd</sup> worker is not an option, the ladder should be **tied-off to a solid object** and any tools or materials required should be placed in a container and raised or lowered by rope. Further to this, if ladders *are* being used as work-platforms, (where the worker may be required to stand on a 4" wide tread for extended periods), accommodations should be allowed for **adequate rest periods due to potential ergonomic hazards** on the feet, legs, back and neck.

- ▲ When not in use, ladders should be stored **inside** – away from extreme heat, cold or ultra-violet rays which will compromise the integrity of the material.



It only takes a second of inattention to potentially change your life forever – do not become complacent when using any type of ladder.