

Portable Ladder Inspection Program for Youngstown State University

Policy Statement

It is the goal of Youngstown State University to provide a safe and healthful environment to all employees. It is, therefore, the University's intention to do all that it can to eliminate the potential for injuries due to falls from faulty portable ladders by providing the proper engineering controls and ongoing inspection programs. In its efforts to accomplish this goal, the University has established this policy to protect employees from accidental injuries resulting from faulty ladders. It is mandatory employees adhere to all aspects of this policy. Furthermore, it is the intention of Youngstown State University to comply with sections of 29 CFR §1910.25-27 dealing with portable wooden, portable aluminum and fixed ladders. A copy of this standard is included for reference in this program and can be found in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety and the departmental offices of employees impacted by this program. Anyone having any questions about this policy or suggestions for improving it should address them to the Director of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety.

General Guidelines for the Inspection of Portable Ladders

1. All wooden parts should be free from splinters, cracks and decay. Metal ladders should be inspected for slivers and dents that would compromise the structural integrity of the ladder.
2. Joints between the steps (rungs) and the side rails should be tight. Rungs should not move when twisted by hand.
3. All hardware and fittings should be securely attached.
4. All moveable parts should operate freely without binding or undue play. Lubricate if necessary.
5. Frayed or badly worn rope should be replaced
6. Safety feet should be sound and unbroken.
7. Rungs/steps should be free of grease, oil, or any other substance that would make them slippery. Wooden ladders having oil or grease on standing and/or gripping surfaces should be steam cleaned to remove the substance. Under no circumstances should corrosive or alkali materials be used to remove grease or oil, as these may compromise the structural integrity of the ladder. Rungs/steps on metal ladders must be corrugated, knurled or coated with a slip resistant material.

8. No rungs/steps may be missing.
9. Stepladders should have a metal spreader or locking device of sufficient size and strength to securely hold the front and back sections in an open position.
10. The spreader should not have any sharp objects protruding from it.
11. No ladder should be painted or coated with any material that may cover up obvious defects.

All ladders should be inspected using these criteria before each use. A ladder that has any defect that would compromise the safety of the ladder must be taken out of service immediately and marked with a red tag bearing the words DANGEROUS -- DO NOT USE. Employees may not make repairs to ladders on their own. Defective ladders, after they have been red-tagged should be reported by the employee to his/her supervisor. The supervisor or department head will decide if the ladder is to be replaced or repaired. If it is decided the ladder is to be repaired, the Director of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety will be informed prior to any repairs being made to assure the repairs are performed in accordance with OSHA regulations. In most instances, repairs should be made by the manufacturer.

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