



Toolbox Talk

with Safety Officer Mark Solano, CHST.
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Why Ladder Safety is Key

Ladders are everyday tools in many workplaces, but incorrect use can lead to serious injuries. Following ladder safety rules is crucial to prevent accidents.

Choosing Your Ladder Wisely

- **Right Material and Size:** Match the ladder to your job. Consider its material and ensure it's tall enough for your task without risking overreach.
- **Load Capacity:** Select a ladder that can safely support the user, along with any tools or materials.

Inspect Before You Step

- **Routine Checks:** Before using a ladder, inspect it for any damage or wear. Look for loose components, damaged rungs, or faulty locks.
- **Tagging Out:** If a ladder is damaged, tag it clearly and remove it from service until it can be safely repaired or replaced.

Safe Setup and Use

- **Stable Ground:** Always set up the ladder on firm, level ground. Avoid slippery or uneven surfaces.
- **Proper Angles and Extension:** For extension ladders, ensure they're extended fully with locks engaged. Set the ladder at an appropriate angle following the 4-to-1 rule: *For every four feet in height, move the base one foot away from the wall.*
- **Climbing Safely:** Maintain three points of contact with the ladder at all times. Avoid carrying heavy items up or down the ladder.

Care and Storage

- **Storage:** Store ladders in a dry, secure place to avoid damage.
- **Maintenance:** Regularly check and maintain ladders to keep them in good working order.

Extension Ladders: Special Considerations

- **Proper Use:** Follow specific guidelines to ensure safety, such as the correct overlap of sections for extension ladders and maintaining a secure footing.

Repair or Replace

- **Professional Repair:** Have damaged ladders repaired by professionals or replace them if they cannot be fixed safely.
- **Report Problems:** Always report any issues with ladders to prevent accidents.

A Culture of Safety

Promoting ladder safety is a team effort. Regular training, clear communication about the importance of safety, and encouraging everyone to take responsibility can help maintain a safe working environment.

Ladder safety is an essential part of workplace safety. By choosing the right ladder, inspecting it before use, using it correctly, and ensuring proper care and storage, we can significantly reduce the risk of injuries. Remember, safety starts with you.

