
Chapter 17 : LADDER SAFETY

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

CUNNINGHAM PAVING, as employer, is responsible for providing portable ladders that meet various governmental standards such as OSHA Standards 1910.25, 1910.26, and 1926.1053.

Each portable ladder user is responsible for inspecting the ladder before each use. Be sure to tag any defective ladder and immediately remove it from service.

Given below are standard construction and training requirements as well as basic safety guidelines.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

1. All ladders shall be constructed of wood, metal, or other equivalent material and shall have a safety factor of not less than four times maximum intended load. Each step or rung shall be capable of supporting a single concentrated load of at least 250 pounds.
2. Rungs, cleats, and steps of portable ladders and fixed ladders shall be spaced not less than 10 inches nor more than 14 inches apart, as measured between center lines of the rungs, cleats and steps.
3. The rungs and steps of portable metal ladders shall be corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid-resistant material, or otherwise treated to minimize slipping.

BASIC TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. **CUNNINGHAM PAVING** shall provide a training program for each employee using ladders and stairways. The program, conducted by a competent person, shall enable each employee to recognize hazards related to ladders and stairways and shall train each employee in the procedures to be followed to minimize these hazards.
2. Retraining shall be provided for each employee as necessary so that the employee maintains the understanding and knowledge acquired through compliance with the OSHA training requirement section 1926.1060.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. Heavy duty, portable, fiberglass ladders shall be the preferred choice of ladders. Such ladders shall be equipped with safety shoes, spikes or spurs and shall have flat top rungs.

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2. Persons working around or with electricity may **not** use all-metal ladders. Ladders for this use may be constructed of fiberglass or wood properly treated and unpainted. Also, metal rungs may be used on ladders having fiberglass side rails provided standards for electrical conductivity are maintained.
 3. Specialty ladders include those designed for use on specific types of scaffolding. Rung and cleat wooden ladders, constructed for use on one-time applications, are permitted but shall be destroyed immediately upon completion of the job for which they were constructed.
 4. All portable ladders shall be equipped with safety shoes, metal spikes, or spurs. This includes wood ladders. This does not apply to step ladders or hook ladders.
 5. Stepladders shall not exceed twenty feet (20 ft) in height. A substantial spreader shall be provided on stepladders to hold the front and back sections in the open position.
 6. All ladders must be regularly inspected by a competent person to ensure their safe working condition. Records of inspection should be submitted to the Safety Director.
 7. Portable ladders used for access to an upper landing surface must have side rails that extend at least 3 feet (0.9 meters) above the upper landing surface to which the ladder is used to gain access.
 8. Ladders shall be used only for the purpose for which they were designed.
 9. Ladders shall be used at an angle such that the horizontal distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is approximately one-quarter of the working length of the ladder.
 10. Ladders placed in any location where they can be displaced by workplace activities or traffic, such as in passageways, doorways, or driveways shall be secured to prevent accidental displacement or a barricade shall be used to keep the activities or traffic away from the ladder.
 11. The top or top step of a stepladder shall not be used as a step.
 12. Cross-bracing on the rear section of stepladders shall not be used for climbing unless the ladders are designed and provided with steps for climbing on both front and rear sections.