



# Ladder Safety... One Step at a Time!

According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), more than 500,000 people are treated and about 300 people die in the US every year due to injuries resulting from falls from ladders. In Washington State last FY over 4,600 workers were injured from falls onto a lower level incurring over \$55 Million in expenses.<sup>1</sup> As we can see falls are no small matter and unsafe ladder usage is a leading cause of these accidents. Please take some time to read the following so we can help you avoid becoming a statistic.



## TIPS FOR USING LADDERS SAFELY

Select the right ladder for the job – things to consider include:

- How high you need to reach?
- How much weight does the ladder need to support (include tools/equipment)?

Always inspect the ladder before using it – look for:

- Cracked, split, worn, broken, twisted/distorted rails, braces, steps, rungs, and feet
- Corrosion, rust, oxidization and excessive wear, especially on treads
- Missing identification labels
- Loose or faulty spreaders, locks, and other metal parts (step ladders)
- Rot, decay or warped rails (wooden ladders)
- Cracks and exposed fiberglass (fiberglass ladders)
- Loose, broken, deteriorated or missing extension locks, chains or ropes (extension ladders)



Tag defective ladders and take them out of service.

Make sure your shoes are free of mud, grease, or other substances that could cause you to slip.

Always face the ladder and use both hands while climbing up or down a ladder.

Never attempt to carry tools/materials in your hands while climbing up or down a ladder. Use a tool belt, hand line, or other means to raise/lower items as needed.

Never stand on the top step of a stepladder or top 3 rungs of a straight, single, or extension ladder.

Maintain 3 points of contact- must have both hands free when climbing or descending a ladder.

Never use a desk or chair as a ladder.

Use the right ladder for the job- Taking short cuts leads to accidents.

**DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND A LADDER AT WORK IF YOU NEEDED ONE?**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LADDER SAFETY LOG ON TO



<sup>1</sup> [HTTP://WWW.LNI.WA.GOV/CLAIMSINS/INSURANCE/DATASTATISTICS/WORKERSCOMPDATA/DEFAULT.ASP](http://www.lni.wa.gov/CLAIMSINS/INSURANCE/DATASTATISTICS/WORKERSCOMPDATA/DEFAULT.ASP)

SAFETY MATTERS