

LOSS CONTROL

Information Bulletin

LADDER INSPECTION AND REPAIR GUIDE

An unsafe ladder is a hazard to the user and can be the cause of a serious or even deadly accident. Ladder safety is frequently taken for granted by the user. Unless specific steps are taken to insure the safety of the equipment, a damaged, misused, or worn-out ladder could be the cause of serious accidents.

Two ladder related injuries have occurred in the ForestFund in the last three years. One claim was caused from overreaching and falling from ladder. This claim resulted in a back injury and a cost of \$176,900. The other claim caused by stepping from a ladder to a stool and fell resulting in injuries to hip, back, and knee. The incurred cost is \$276,200. Do not discount the dangerous nature of them.

WORKER MORAL- Employees who are provided with safe and functional equipment have a better attitude toward their work than those who are required to work with damaged or otherwise unsafe equipment.

WORKER EFFICIENCY- A damaged or worn-out ladder left in service will frequently be the cause of lost working time. (Work time is lost because the worker will need to work slower and more cautiously with the damaged ladder, worker will be unable to complete the job due to an unusable ladder, or the worker simply need to take time to acquire another ladder.)



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FACTORS THAT MAKE LADDERS UNSAFE

- Missing components, such as the treads, shoes, truss blocks under steps, braces, and especially labels can make a ladder unsafe
- Damaged parts weaken the ladder structure
- Ladders, like all mechanical devices, wear out with use
- Ladders with alterations or ladders that have been modified, may weaken the ladder structure and cause failure
- Improper storage can cause ladders to bow, rot, melt, char, corrode and otherwise deteriorate causing them to be unsafe
- Improper handling can damage ladders and ladder parts. (Ladders that are dropped, tipped over, “walked”, thrown, skidded, shoved, can be easily damaged)
- Ladders can be damaged by horseplay, trickery, sabotage, and malicious destruction
- The leading cause of unsafe ladders is **NORMAL WEAR**. (Ladders that have never been abused or misused will still wear out)

Tips to help minimize the risk of a fall:

- **Unless the ladder is specifically designed for such a purpose, do not allow more than one climber on a ladder at one time**

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- **Never jump or slide down a ladder more than one rung at a time.**
- **Regularly clean the soles of shoes to maximize traction**
- **Use towlines, a tool belt or an assistant to supply materials and tools so the climber's hands can remain free**
- **Climb slowly and deliberately, avoiding sudden movements**
- **Climbers should keep the center of the stomach between the ladder side rails when climbing. Do not overreach or lean to the side while working, as this could cause the ladder to tip**
- **Do not use metal ladders near electrical lines or during an electrical storm**
- **Do not use ladders outdoors in heavy winds or storms**
- **Ladders should be on level ground at all times**

Ladder in water with electrical drill



Descend ladder while facing it

