

Stepladders





A list of best practices for loss prevention to help Ohio Mutual agent partners and members identify the most common hazards that are associated with stepladder safety.




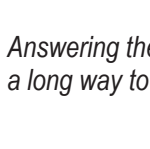
Best Practices

Stepladders are commonly used in many workplaces, allowing workers to access areas they couldn't otherwise reach safely. Although extremely helpful, improper use of stepladders can endanger workers, so much so that they ranked #3 in OSHA's most recent ranking of Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Standards. Of the 2,018 ladder citations issued, 244 of those violations were attributed to ladders not being used for their designed purpose.

STEPLADDER SAFETY CHECKLIST

Utilize this checklist to ensure safe use of stepladders:

-  Is the ladder tall enough to do the job without standing on the top cap? (If not, get a taller ladder or use other equipment for the work, such as scaffolding or appropriate lifts.)
-  Is the stepladder on a flat, stable, and hard surface with all 4 feet touching the ground so that it doesn't rock. (Stepladders should not be set up on other elevated platforms.)
- Is the surface the ladder is being placed upon hard enough to prevent it from creeping and settling once it's loaded?
- Is the bottom of the ladder clear of loose materials that can create a trip or slip hazard when stepping on/off the ladder?
- Is the ladder clear of any doors that can swing open and hit it?

-  Are both spreaders (that create the A-frame of the ladder) fully engaged and locked?
-  If the ladder is being used in a public area with heavy foot traffic, is the work area marked off to warn passing individuals?
-  Is the area clear of any electrical hazards for either the ladder or the user, such as overhead power lines?
-  Are the ladder treads/surfaces clean, dry, and clear of any loose debris that could increase the risk of slipping?
- Do I have the appropriate ladder material for the job at hand — wood, aluminum, steel, or fiberglass?

Answering these questions before placement of a stepladder goes a long way to preventing serious accidents and potential fires.

