TOOLBOX TALK

Ladder Safety

Topic	Ladder Safety	Attendees	0

WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT

Ladders are on almost every job, and that is exactly why people get careless with them. Most ladder falls happen from low heights on quick jobs that were never meant to take long. Five minutes setting the ladder up properly is a lot cheaper than months off work.

1. Check the ladder before every use: feet, rungs, locks, rails and labels. If it is damaged, tag it out and get it off site.
2. Use industrial rated ladders to AS/NZS 1892 only, and non-conductive fibreglass ladders anywhere near electrical work.
3. Check the load rating on the label covers you, your tools and anything you carry up. Most falls happen when people go over it without thinking.
4. Set extension ladders at 1 in 4: one out at the base for every four up, which is about 75 degrees.
5. Extension ladders must stick out at least 1 m above the landing and be tied off or secured at the top.
6. Secure the bottom too: tie it, use a stabiliser, or have someone foot it while the top is tied. Never stand it on bricks, offcuts or a pallet to make up height.
7. Keep three points of contact while climbing. Carry tools in a belt or haul them up on a line, not in your hands.
8. Face the ladder going up and coming down, and clean mud or grease off your boots and the rungs before you climb.
9. Keep your belt buckle between the stiles. If you have to overreach, climb down and move the ladder.
10. Never stand on the top cap or top step of a step ladder, or work off the top three rungs of an extension ladder.
11. Open step ladders fully with the spreaders locked. Never lean a folded step ladder against a wall and climb it.
12. Set up on firm, level ground, clear of doorways, traffic, plant and power lines. One person on a ladder at a time.
13. Do not paint, patch or join ladders. Paint hides cracks, and homemade repairs fail without warning.
14. Stop using a ladder outside in strong wind or heavy rain. A gust can move the ladder, or you, without warning.
15. Ladders are for short, light jobs. If the task is long, heavy or needs both hands, use a platform ladder, mobile scaffold or EWP instead. Many principal contractors restrict ladder use on their sites, so check the site rules.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CREW

1. Who checked their ladder before using it today, and what did you look for?
2. Which job on this site right now would be safer from a platform than a ladder?
3. Where do damaged ladders go, and who do you tell?
4. What should you do if you can only reach the work by leaning out past the stiles?
5. How is the bottom of your ladder secured today?

Reference: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.4 (Falls)

RUN BY

	Name	Signature	Date	
Presenter				

ATTENDANCE

Name	Role / company	Signature	Date

Name	Role / company	Signature	Date

Keep this record with your site safety file.