

**Fixed Ladder Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to protect employees from hazards associated with fixed ladder installations and to ensure compliance with NH Administrative Rules Department of Labor standards.

**Responsibilities**

The District shall:

1. Ensure that all fixed ladder installations meet requirements listed in section 3 of this policy.
2. Ensure that all portable ladders meet the requirements in sections of this policy.
3. Provide stepladders with metal spreader or locking device of sufficient size and strength to securely hold the front and back sections in the open position.
4. Train employees in proper inspection, use and set-up of ladders including wooden, metal and non-self-supporting ladders.

The Employee shall:

1. Perform pre-use ladder inspection, according to section 3 of this policy, before placing any ladder into service.
2. Remove from service any ladder that has developed defects and is unsafe for use.
3. Tag or mark unsafe ladders with the words "Dangerous, Do Not Use."
4. Set up non self-supporting ladders on a sound base at a 4:1 pitch to prevent slipping.
5. Set up any ladder used to gain access to a roof or platform must extend at least 3 feet above the platform.

**Procedural Overview:**

- Fixed Ladder Installation Requirements:
  1. Metal rungs must have a minimum diameter of 3/4 inch.
  2. Wooden rungs must have a minimum diameter of 1-1/8 inch.
  3. Rungs must be spaced uniformly no more than 12 inches apart.
  4. Rungs must be a minimum of 16 inches in length.
  5. Ladder side rails must extend 3 1/2 feet above the top landing.
- Fixed Ladder Safeguards:
  1. Ladders more than 20 feet in length must be equipped with safety devices such as cages, wells, or fall protection systems.
  2. Ladders with cages must have a platform every 30 feet of travel.
  3. Ladders without cages must have a platform every 20 feet of travel.
  4. Cages on fixed ladders must extend at least 42 inches above the top landing.
  5. The bottom of the cage shall be not less than 7 feet nor more than 8 feet from the bottom of the ladder.
- Portable Ladder Pre-use Inspections:
  1. Check joints between the steps and side rails to make sure they are tight
  2. Hardware fittings should be firmly attached
  3. Lubricate pulleys, locks and wheels when necessary.
  4. Look for cracks in wood ladders.
  5. Check for frays in ropes of extension ladders. Replace worn or frayed ropes before use.
  6. Ensure that movable parts operate without binding or undue play.
  7. Look for bends or cracks in metal ladders.

- Portable Ladder Use Precautions:
  1. Always check for overhead power lines and maintain a safe distance from them when raising or lowering and using portable ladders of wood, metal or fiberglass.
  2. Always check ladder for load capacities before use.
  3. Set up non self-supporting ladders on a sound base at a 4:1 pitch to prevent slipping.
  4. Do not place ladders on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.

***Legal References:***

*N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Lab 1403.32 Ladders (Fixed and Portable)*

Approved: 03/01/16  
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