

Toolbox Talk

39. Ladders, Step Ladders & Trestles



What?

- Ladders, and stepladders are pieces of equipment which primarily provide access but also can be a platform for some types of work at height. However other types of platform must be considered first such as tower scaffolding or mobile elevated work platforms since they are more suited to provide a safe working platform, particularly when carrying out “two handed” activities
- Steps and ladders should only be used for short duration work

Why?

- A third of all reported fall-from-height incidents involve ladders and stepladders – on average this accounts for 14 deaths and 1200 major injuries to workers in the UK each year. Many of these injuries are caused by inappropriate or incorrect use of the equipment
- Steps and ladders must be inspected on a regular basis to check for faults or damage and any defect should be reported immediately and the equipment withdrawn from use

Do



- ✓ Visually inspect before use and on a regular basis
- ✓ Ensure equipment is placed on a firm level surface
- ✓ Ensure ladders are securely fixed at the top or footed at the bottom
- ✓ Ensure ladders are positioned properly (1 out for every 4 up)
- ✓ Check step ladders are fully extended
- ✓ Make sure you always have a hand hold – maintain “3 points of contact”

Don't



- ✗ Use damaged or defective equipment – withdraw from use
- ✗ Paint ladders or steps - it could cover defects
- ✗ Allow any more than one person on the ladder at one time
- ✗ Over-reach - move the ladder instead
- ✗ Rest ladder against fragile material
- ✗ Carry tools or equipment - use a shoulder bag or tool belt



Document Name	TBT 39 Ladders, Step Ladders & Trestles	Document No	FM/HS/TBT/041
Document Owner	Stuart Care	Date of Issue	13/01/2017
Classification	Internal Use	Version No	01