

Union County Public Schools

Facilities Department

Ladder

Safe Work Practices

Ladders must be maintained in good condition at all times pursuant to OSHA standard 1910.25-27. The following rules for ladder safety are to ensure employee safety while using a ladder to perform job duties.

- Ladders will be visually inspected each day prior to use.
- After visual inspection, if a ladder is determined to be damaged it is to be tagged and removed from service. When a ladder is removed from service it must be rendered useless as a ladder (i.e. cut top off) and properly disposed of before a new replacement ladder is purchased.
- Non-self-supporting ladders are to be positioned at such an angle that the distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is about one-fourth the working length of the ladder.
- Ladder rungs must be parallel, level and uniformly spaced when the ladder is in position for use. Rungs must be spaced between 10-14 inches apart. For extension trestle ladders, the spacing must be 8-18 inches for the base and 6-12 inches on the extension section. Rungs must be shaped so that an employee's foot cannot slide off and must be skid resistant.
- Ladders are to be kept free of oil, grease, wet paint and other slipping hazards. Wood ladders must not be coated with any opaque covering except identification or warning labels on one face only of a side rail.
- Foldout or step ladders must have a metal spreader or locking device to hold the front and back sections in an open position when in use.
- Never stand on rungs that are not designed for that purpose.
- An extension or straight ladder used to access and elevated surface (roof, etc.) must extend at least 3 feet above the point of support.
- Keep a three-point stance when climbing a ladder (two hands, one foot or two feet, one hand). Keep your body near the middle of the step and always face the ladder while climbing.
- The area around the top and bottom of a ladder must be kept clear when in use. Ladders must be used on a firm, level surface.

- Ladders must not be tied or fastened together to provide longer sections unless they are specifically designed for such use.
- Never use a ladder for any purpose other than the one for which it was designed and do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder.