

# Ladders – Inspection Fact Sheet



## WHEN SHOULD YOU INSPECT LADDERS?

- Inspect new ladders promptly upon receipt.
- Inspect ladders before each use.
- Check the condition of ladders that have been dropped or have fallen before using them again.
- Inspect ladders before storing to make sure they are in good condition to store, or need repair, replacement or remove from the site.

## What should you look for when inspecting any ladder?

- missing or loose steps or rungs (they are loose if you can move them by hand)
- damaged or worn non-slip feet
- loose nails, screws, bolts or nuts
- loose or faulty spreaders, locks, and other metal parts in poor repair
- rot, decay or warped rails in wooden ladders
- cracks and exposed fibreglass in fibreglass ladders
- cracked, split, worn or broken rails, braces, steps or rungs
- sharp edges on rails and rungs
- rough or splintered surfaces
- corrosion, rust, oxidization and excessive wear, especially on treads
- twisted or distorted rails. Check ladders for distortion by sighting along the rails. Using a twisted or bowed ladder is hazardous.
- missing identification labels

## What other things should I look for when inspecting stepladders?

- wobble
- loose or bent hinges and hinge spreaders
- broken stop on a hinge spreader
- loose pail shelf

## What should you look for when inspecting extension ladders?

- loose, broken or missing extension locks
- defective locks that do not set properly when ladder is extended
- sufficient lubrication of working parts
- defective cords, chains and ropes
- missing or defective pads or sleeves

## What should you do after inspecting any ladder?

- Tag any defective ladders and take them out of service.

- Clean fibreglass ladders every three months. Spray lightly with a clear lacquer or paste wax.
- Protect wooden ladders with a clear sealer or wood preservative.
- Replace worn or frayed ropes on extension ladders.
- Lubricate pulleys on extension ladders regularly.
- Tag and take out of service any ladder that is has defects, or is broken or bent. Destroy ladders that cannot be repaired safely by a person authorized by the manufacturer. Ladders should be destroyed in a way that makes them useless.

**What are some things you should not do after inspecting ladders?**

- Do not make temporary or makeshift repairs.
- Do not try to straighten or use bent or bowed ladders.,

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