

ACCIDENT ALERT

Falls from stepladders can kill

A health and safety message from the WCB

The WCB has recently received a number of accident reports involving workers falling from stepladders. On average, 10 workers die every year after a fall from an elevation. The links to resources in this bulletin may help to prevent similar incidents at your workplace.

Please pass this newsletter along to friends, family, and colleagues.

Stepladder safety tips

1 Position the ladder properly

Fully open the stepladder on a level surface and lock its spreaders in place.

Never use a stepladder folded up and leaning against a surface.

2 Use a ladder that is long enough

Never climb on the top two steps of a stepladder.

Never place the stepladder on boxes or unstable bases to gain extra height.



3 Climb and use the ladder carefully

Maintain 3-point contact with the ladder while climbing (such as 1 hand and 2 feet).

Brace yourself with your free hand, if possible.

Always face the stepladder treads while using a stepladder.

Never overreach or lean to one side while using a stepladder.

Never carry heavy, bulky, or other objects that may make going up or down a ladder unsafe.

Recent accidents

- A business owner sustained fatal injuries after falling approximately 9 feet from a stepladder while performing carpentry work over the entrance to his shop.
- A worker fell to the ground from a 6-foot stepladder while placing product (chairs) on a 7-foot elevated display area. The worker sustained hip and back injuries, and possibly a head injury.

Additional resources

For additional resources visit www.healthandsafetycentre.org/enews/ha/aa2004-09.htm