



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

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eTOOLS

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OSHA CONSTRUCTION eTOOL

Falls:

Misuse of Portable Ladders

Electrical

Falls

Struck-By

Trenching

Scope

SH Program

Am I In Danger?

You risk falling if portable ladders are not safely positioned each time they are used. While you are on a ladder, it may move and slip from its supports. You can also lose your balance while getting on or off an unsteady ladder. Falls from ladders can cause injuries ranging from sprains to death.

How Do I Avoid Hazards?

- Position portable ladders so the side rails extend at least 3 feet above the landing.
- Secure side rails at the top to a rigid support and use a grab device when 3 foot extension is not possible.
- Make sure that the weight on the ladder will not cause it to slip off its support.
- Before each use inspect ladders for cracked or broken parts such as rungs, steps, side rails, feet and locking components.
- Do not apply more weight on the ladder than it is designed to support [*For additional information, see [Ladder Safety](#)*].
- Use only ladders that comply with OSHA design standards [[29 CFR 1926.1053\(a\)\(1\)](#)].



Additional Information:

- [29 CFR 1926 Subpart X](#), Ladders. OSHA Standard.
 - [1926.1053](#), Ladders
 - [1926.1053\(b\)\(1\)](#)
- [Worker Deaths by Falls: A Summary of Surveillance Findings and Investigative Case Reports](#). US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), National Institute



This ladder is being used at the proper angle, and appears to be stable and secure.



[Misuse of Portable Ladders](#)

for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Publication 2000-116, (2000, September).

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