



# Southern Oregon Construction Safety & Health Forum

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Third Edition

**AGC** Oregon  
Columbia  
Chapter  
ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS

It remains our mission to maintain effective safety and health program communication with AGC members. In this busy building season it can be difficult to commit to meetings; this forum letter is intended to give us all opportunity to share information on current rules, conditions, and changes that effect our safety cultures and our communities. If you have information you are willing to share with members, please contact me and we will ensure that information gets out for everyone's benefit: John Jean, AGC SMC, [johnj@agc-oregon.org](mailto:johnj@agc-oregon.org) or 541-613-6859.

## ***It is imperative that we all place renewed, serious, and effective focus on ladder safety.***

In construction, we continue to have an increase in frequency and severity of injuries from the use of all types of ladders. There is not one segment of construction that is more prone than others; it's happening everywhere! We have had serious injuries from falls from four foot, six foot, eight foot, and even taller ladders. This is an opportunity to enhance our **safety cultures** by preventing life changing injuries to our employees, co-workers, friends, and family members. Let's all make this serious commitment and ensure we are doing effective training, using the correct ladders for tasks, inspecting and correcting, and ensuring the safe use by everyone when working from ladders.

### ***Unsafe behaviors causing accidents and injuries:***

- Improper ladder used, improper class of ladder
- Ladder is too short for work task
- Damaged or altered ladder used
- Rail, rung, spreader, or feet of ladder damaged
- Overloaded ladder, person, tools, and materials
- Unstable ladder, position of feet, uneven ground
- Slippery footing, grease, oil, ice, rain, mud, sand, etc.
- No three point contact used (two feet and one hand / or two hands and one foot) at all times
- Unsecured ladder tip, no tie-off used, improper angle
- Awkward work, holding tools or materials
- Leaning, reaching, or stretching outside center alignment of rails
- Sitting or standing astride top of ladder
- Standing on top of ladder or top rung of ladder
- Twisting, standing sideways, jumping off
- Loss of attention to tasks, talking, phones, smoking

### **OSHA Stairways and Ladders – A Guide to OSHA Rules**

The following are excerpts from: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

**Stepladders** ■ Do not use the top or top step of a stepladder as a step. ■ Do not use cross bracing on the rear section of stepladders for climbing unless the ladders are designed and provided with steps for climbing on both front and rear sections. ■ Metal spreader or locking devices must be provided on stepladders to hold the front and back sections in an open position when ladders are being used.



## ***The following general requirements apply to all ladders, including ladders built at the jobsite:***

Maintain ladders free of oil, grease, and other slipping hazards. ■ Do not load ladders beyond their maximum intended load nor beyond their manufacturer's rated capacity. ■ Use ladders only for their designed purpose. ■ Do not use ladders on slippery surfaces unless secured or provided with slip-resistant feet. Do not use slip-resistant feet as a substitute for exercising care when placing, lashing, or holding a ladder upon slippery surfaces. ■ Secure ladders placed in areas such as passageways, doorways, driveways, or where they can be displaced by workplace activities or traffic, or use a barricade to keep traffic or activity away from the ladder. ■ Keep areas clear around the top and bottom of ladders. ■ Do not move, shift, or extend ladders while in use. ■ Use ladders equipped with nonconductive side rails if the worker or the ladder could contact exposed energized electrical equipment. ■ Face the ladder when moving up or down. ■ Use at least one hand to grasp the ladder when climbing. ■ Do not carry objects or loads that could cause loss of balance and falling.

### ***Ladders needing repairs are subject to the following rules:***

■ Portable ladders with structural defects—such as broken or missing rungs, cleats, or steps; broken or split rails; corroded components; or other faulty or defective components—must immediately be marked defective or tagged with "Do Not Use" or similar language and withdrawn from service until repaired. ■ Fixed ladders with structural defects—such as broken or missing rungs, cleats, or steps; broken or split rails; or corroded components—must be withdrawn from service until repaired. ■ Defective fixed ladders are considered withdrawn from use when they are immediately tagged with "Do Not Use" or similar language, or marked in a manner that identifies them as defective or blocked—such as with a plywood attachment that spans several rungs. ■ Ladder repairs must restore the ladder to a condition meeting its original design criteria before the ladder is returned to use.

### ***Ladder Don'ts:***

■ Don't place the ladder against a weak surface or window. ■ Don't use metal ladders near live electrical lines. ■ Don't set ladders on boxes or other objects. ■ Don't get on a ladder if another person is on it. ■ Don't work on a ladder if it is very windy. ■ Don't reposition a ladder while you are on it.

***Make ladder safety a priority of your safety culture!***