

# Safety Fact Sheet



The Utah Safety Council cares about your safety outside of the work setting. We offer resources that keep you and your loved ones safe at home, at play and on the go.

## RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT LADDER SAFETY

Use of ladders was associated with an estimated 175,790 injuries treated in hospital emergency departments. The legs and feet were injured most often and the most common injury to them were strains and sprains. Fractures were the most common injury type, usually involving the arms and hands. Sprains and strains were the most common injury to the lower body area; contusions and abrasions for the upper body area including shoulders and neck; lacerations and avulsions to the head and face.

*Source: National Safety Council Injury Facts Publication, 2015 Edition*

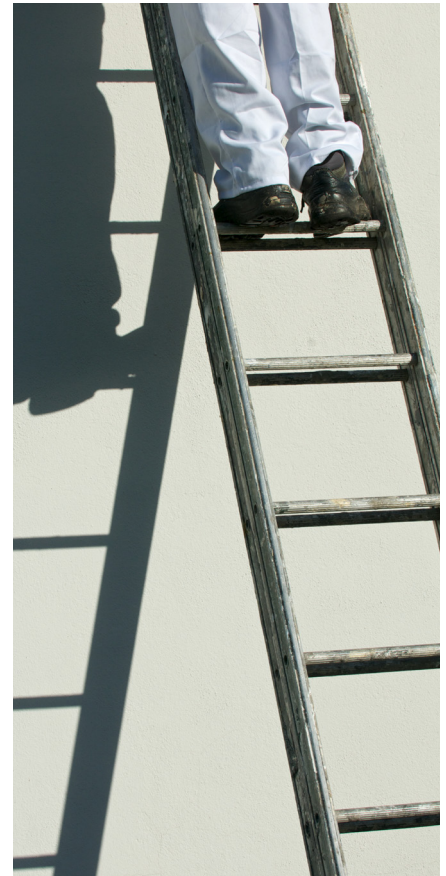
### SELECTION: When choosing a portable ladder, consider:

- Type (step ladder, straight or extension ladders)
- Length (convenient height without reaching)
- Strength (determine the weight and stress the ladder has to bear)
- Material (wood is non-conductive, heavy, and rots; metal is light, weather-resistant, but conducts electricity; and fiberglass is light, long-lasting, non-conductive, and has good traction.)

Inspect all ladders before using them. Look for loose, broken, or missing parts, slippery rungs, skid-resistant features, movable parts, and ample oil on metal bearings. Don't use damaged ladders. Instead have the ladders repaired or destroyed.

### SAFE USE: A few precautions for safe ladder use include the following:

- Do not use metal ladders near electrical lines.
- Don't tie ladders together.
- Set the ladder on a firm, solid surface.
- Place a straight or extension ladder at an angle so that the ladder's base is about one foot out for every four feet of ladder working length (support point to base).
- Face the ladder and use both hands to grip the side rails when climbing or descending.
- Don't carry tools up a ladder—hoist tools up to you or wear a tool belt.
- Do not stand on the top two steps of a stepladder or the top four rungs of a straight ladder.
- If your belt buckle goes outside of the side rails, you are reaching too far. Reposition the ladder.



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## **CARE AND MAINTENANCE: Here are a few pointers on your ladder care and maintenance:**

- Avoid makeshift portable ladder repairs.
- Do not try to straighten or use a bent ladder.
- Always have a qualified person perform repairs.
- Store ladders in areas with good ventilation, no tripping hazards, no nearby sources of heat or moisture, and in an area that lends itself to safe withdrawal of any ladders you need.