



GoM Region Ladder Usage and Inspection Safe Work Practice (SWP)

1 Purpose/Scope

The purpose of this Safe Work Practice (SWP) is to provide instruction on inspecting and using ladders.

2 Key Responsibilities

Operation Supervisors are responsible for implementation and enforcement of the Ladder Usage Program.

3 Procedures

3.1 Overview

Working on and around ladders is hazardous. Ladders are major sources of injuries and fatalities. Hazards associated with ladders could include:

1. Falls from ladders
2. Struck by falling ladders
3. Struck by materials or tools falling from ladders
4. Tripping over ladders (erect or lying on the floor)
5. Lifting heavy ladders
6. Striking persons or objects when carrying ladders
7. Contact with electrical equipment

3.1.1 Fixed Ladders

Design, construction, and installation of all fixed ladders shall comply with the OSHA regulation standard (29 CFR 1910.27).

The following requirements shall be met when using fixed ladders at a BP facility:

- ☑ Never lean from a ladder where the center of the user's waist or belt buckle is past the edge of the ladder.
- ☑ Both hands shall be available for climbing. Never carry objects in hands while climbing.
- ☑ Raising and lowering of tools shall be by tool case or other positive means that will prevent objects from being dropped.
- ☑ Hand tools must be tethered to person when working at heights above 6 feet.

3.1.2 Portable Ladders

The following requirements shall be met when using portable ladders at a BP facility:

- Portable ladders shall be made of non-conductive material. Metal and wooden portable ladders are prohibited
- Do not exceed manufacturer's weight limit.
- Do not stand on the top step or use a top rung of portable ladders (e.g, A-frame style for top step or extension/leaning style for top rung).
- Inspect ladders before use.
- Straight and extension ladders shall have safety shoes (non-skidpads).
- Adhere to the required angle of one foot horizontal for every four feet vertical for straight or extension ladders (for example, 8 foot vertical ladder equals 2 feet horizontal; 10 feet vertical ladder equals 2.5 feet horizontal).
- Confirm that ladder is secured (tied off) or manually held while in use to prevent slippage (and extends 36" above surface line if using extension ladder).
- Never lean from a ladder where the center of the user's waist or belt buckle is past the edge of the ladder.
- Never use buckets, drums, or other objects to substitute for a ladder.
- Never place a ladder on buckets, drums or other objects to raise a working level.
- Never use a folded stepladder to substitute for a straight ladder.
- Confirm stepladders are in the full-open, locked position before use.
- Both hands shall be available for climbing. Never carry objects in hands while climbing.

- Raising and lowering of tools shall be by tool case or other positive means that will prevent objects from being dropped.
- [Hand tools must be tethered to person when working at heights above 6 feet.](#)
- Remove all portable ladders from the work location and properly store them after each use.

3.2 Inspection

3.2.1 Fixed Ladders

Properly inspect fixed ladders before use. The inspection shall include the following:

- Fixed ladders 20 feet or more in height (measured from the ground/deck) have a cage or climb assist device.
 - [Caged ladders of more than 30 feet in continuous length must have platforms. Platforms serve as rest points and break the continual length at no more than 30 feet \(does not apply to emergency escape ladders\).](#)
 - [Cages shall extend down the ladder to a point not less than 7 feet nor more than 8 feet above the base of the ladder, with bottom flared not less than 4 inches, or portion of cage opposite ladder shall be carried to the base.](#)
 - [Cages shall extend a minimum of 42 inches above the top of landing, unless other acceptable protection is provided.](#)
 - [Cages shall not extend less than 27 nor more than 28 inches from the centerline of the rungs of the ladder. Cage shall not be less than 27 inches in width.](#)
- Joints between steps and side rails are tight.
- Hardware and fittings are securely attached.
- Rungs and steps are clean and free of defects.
- Ladder was treated to prevent rust or weathering.

NOTE: Defective fixed ladders shall be tagged out-of-service and repaired before use.

3.2.2 Portable Ladders

Properly inspect portable ladders before use. The inspection shall include the following:

- Ladders are constructed of a non-conductive material.
- Joints between steps and side rails are tight.
- Hardware and fittings are securely attached.
- Moveable parts are free and operable.
- Moveable bearings are lubricated.
- Rope is not worn or frayed.
- Safety feet are operable.
- Rungs and steps are clean and free of defects.

4 Definitions

Term	Definition
Fixed Ladder	A ladder permanently attached to a structure, building, or equipment.
Portable Ladder	A ladder that can be readily moved or carried.

5 Key Documents/Tools/References

[American National Standards Institute: ANSI A14.3-1956, Safety Code for Fixed Ladders; ANSI A1 0.8-1969, Safety Requirements for Scaffolding](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, 29 CFR, 1910.27](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, 29 CFR, 1910.28](#)

Revision Log

Revision Date	Authority	Custodian	Revision Details
02/05/13	GoM H&S Director	GoM Safety Programs Lead	Included hazards associated with ladders in overview section; added guidance on not to exceed manufacturer's weight limit and not to use top step/rung of portable ladders
06/15/12	GoM H&S Director	GoM Safety Programs Lead	Reformatted document to meet new GoM document control template standardization guidelines. Added tool tethering requirement to 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. Added cage requirement clarification to 3.2.1 fixed ladder inspections.
02/03/12	GoM H&S Director	GoM Safety Programs Lead	Revisions to clarify portable ladders rather than all ladders are to be constructed of non-conductive materials. – Section 3.1.
06/01/08	GoM HSSE Director	GoM HSSE Programs Manager	Revisions to ensure stepladders are in the full-open, locked position before use, both hands available for climbing and additional guidance for raising and lowering tools provided.
03/03/06	S. Garner/ S. Tink/ R. DeLeonardis/ C. Jackson	Kathy Kanocz	Reviewed no content revisions. Changed CD # from 10,048 to UPS-US-SW-GOM-HSE-DOC-00118-2. Changed 3 authorities and 1 custodian name.
01/28/02	S. Garner/ B. Herbert/ R. White/S.Flynn	Ray Britt	Initial issue as controlled document. Prior revision history located in hard-copy consolidated manual.

Control Tier: 2-GoM H&S

Document Number: UPS-US-SW-GoM-HSE-DOC-00118-2

Revision Date: 06/15/12

Print Date: 2/19/2013

PAPER COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED. THIS COPY VALID ONLY AT THE TIME OF PRINTING.