



Many of you use ladders on a daily basis. Falls from elevated surfaces are frequently listed as one of the top 10 causes of accidents in the workplace. Are you using ladders in the safest way?

When your store is busy that is a good thing! However it can also mean a lot of activity, people running around not paying attention to details. A lack of housekeeping can cause obstacles for people to easily trip on, fall over. This not only causes frustration, but can also result in serious injuries. Make housekeeping a part of your routine day, throughout the day.

- Your HISIG Loss Control Team
hisigLC@sgbinsurance.com

MINIMIZING INJURIES THROUGH LADDER SAFETY

Prevention can save you money

Most accidents from elevated surfaces occur due to failure to follow basic ladder safety. In an industry that commonly utilizes ladders, prevent injuries by practicing the following safety tips.

Setting up Safely

Make sure you select the correct ladder for the job – check the length and duty rating. Proper length is a minimum of three feet extending over the working surface.

Inspect your ladder before each use for loose or damaged:

- Steps
- Rungs
- Spreaders
- Rung dogs
- Safety feet
- Other parts

Clear the area where you will be working. Never place a ladder in front of a door that isn't locked, blocked or guarded.

Because metal ladders conduct electricity, use a wooden or fiberglass ladder near electrical equipment or machinery.

Check that all locks on extension ladders are properly engaged before placing your ladder on a steady surface. The ground underneath the ladder should be level and firm. Large, flat wooden boards braced underneath a ladder can help level it on an uneven surface or soft ground. Never place a ladder on top of extra stock, product boxes or other potentially unstable surfaces. Straight, single or extension ladders should be set up at approximately a 75 degree angle.

Use the 1:4 ratio to ensure your safety when on a ladder. Place the base of the ladder one foot away from whatever it's leaning against for every four feet of height to the top of the ladder.

Use Caution

Always use caution when using a ladder and do not use a ladder for any other purpose than intended. Other safety considerations include:

- Make sure the weight that your ladder is supporting does not exceed its maximum load rating (user plus materials). And only one person should be on a ladder at a time.
- Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder at all times. Do not lean too far to the side while working. Never overreach – instead, descend from the ladder and move it to a better position.
- Do not step on the top step or bucket shelf, and do not attempt to climb or stand on the rear section of a stepladder.
- Always face the ladder when climbing up or down. Never leave a raised ladder unattended. Slowly step down from a ladder if you feel dizzy or tired.
- Non-slip footwear should be worn at all times when on a ladder. Keep non-slip footwear available to you since dress shoes can pose a safety threat on a ladder.

In an industry that commonly utilizes ladders, minimize ladder accidents by adhering to these safety and prevention tips.

NEW LEGISLATION ALERT

On January 1, 2011, California expanded the definition of what constitutes a “serious violation” of workplace safety standards under California Labor Code Section 6432. Assembly Bill 2774 creates significant consequences for California employers subject to enforcement by the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA).

While IIPP requirements may vary due to the size and nature of your business, there are elements of AB 2774 which will affect all employers and HISIG members should be aware of.

There are expanded reporting requirements and stricter inspection standards regarding IIPP and documentation. Please refer to the HISIG member newsflash for more detail.

questions?

If you have any questions about how AB 2774 will affect your business, or the measures you should take to prevent a citation don't hesitate to contact your HISIG Risk Management team.

**hisigLC@sbginsurance.com
818-449-0230**

Recommendations:

The HISIG Risk Management team would like to remind members of the importance of your safety programs and procedures. Proactive measures will leave you better prepared to rebut a serious citation – whether in response to a standard Cal/OSHA request prior to a citation or at an Appeals Board hearing.

- *Make sure all of your managers are aware of what qualifies an injury to be mandatory to call and report to OSHA*
- *Review if your business is required to have a formal writing Injury and Illness Prevention Program (“IIPP”)*
- *Update and implement your IIPP as well as other safety policies, procedures and training materials*
Document training of both supervisors and employees
- *regarding safe practices as well as particular hazards that may result in death or serious injury*
- *Conduct an audit to determine the existence of serious violations in your workplace*
- *Enforce workplace safety rules*

SAFE HOUSEKEEPING

Emphasize importance with your employees

Lots of activity is a positive sign, signifying more business. When this happens, your workplace is full of action with many workers performing different operations simultaneously. Imagine the chaos that would result if workers did not clean up after themselves. Your workplace would become a hazardous obstacle course as trash and debris piled up, and walking from one point to another would mean navigating through a mess of obstructions. It would not only be aggravating and counterproductive; it would also be very dangerous. Slips, trips and falls are a common cause of injury on the job site, and inadequate housekeeping is a major contributing factor in most of these accidents.

Not only does housekeeping keep everyone safe, it also helps us feel better about our jobs. It will be easier to concentrate and do your best work in a clutter-free environment.

Commit to Housekeeping

Avoiding dangerous conditions like those described above requires a commitment to housekeeping by every individual on our team. This means making spill cleanup, garbage removal, general cleaning and use of trash bins a priority every day, throughout the day.

Good housekeeping also means constant vigilance. Remove any object or material that obstructs a pathway on the floor and take care of other materials that could pose a possible fire hazard or danger for co-workers. This includes things such as: *Scrap materials, empty containers, garbage, food, water or spills, inventory in aisles etc.*

- Encourage employees to store personal items out of the way in storage bins or lockers
- Keep hazardous wastes in covered separate waste containers
- Place “wet floor” signes in wet ares
- Don't leave housekeeping responsibilities for the end of the day
- Never pile material found around fire extinguishers, sprinklers or emergency exits



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